

WAR AND WORSHIP

By HENRY BEDLOW



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WAR AND WORSHIP;

A POEM,

BY

HENRY BEDLOW.

CONVICTIONS BASED ON RECOLLECTIONS OF THE REVOLTS OF 1848.

While the officers attached to the expedition under the command of Lieut. W. F. Lynch were camped at Ain-Jiddy (En Gedi) on the shores of the Dead Sea, a messenger from Jerusalem brought tidings of the revolutionary state of Europe and the spirit of "Popular Rule" animating all parties arrayed against the dominant powers. The following verses were suggested at the time and place above mentioned, roughly sketched in Syria, and completed in Palestine and New York.

HENRY BEDLOW.

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WAR AND WORSHIP.

I.

'Mid palms and cacti bivouacked,
Reclused from worldly cark and care,
A din of conflict freights the air,
And cloistral calm with tumult racked.

Clairaudient in my solitude,
Yet dubious if the stir proclaim
A strife in Freedom's cherished name,
Or mock heroics of a feud ;

Some factious brawl, corrupt in deed ;
A demagogic enterprise,
To cozen, dupe and victimize
The purblind gulls of others' greed ;

Its hurly-burly warlike made,
 With cannon roar and clarion ring,
 And yet a ruffian ranting thing,
A brawling mob's fanfaronade ;

Or rallying slogan, wild huzza,
 Rude shock of armies, hissing bombs,
 The carbine-clatter, roll of drums,
The maddening, murderous coil of war ;

Its 'larums weird, its frenzied shrieks
 Of women in sacked cities, when
 The red streets clogged with armèd men,
But dead—each finding him she seeks.

And clairvoyant, do I behold
 A vision of portentous scope,
 All serfdom marshalling to cope
With despotisms manifold ?

A fond prophetic sight that sees
 The bonds of slave and villeinage,
 Rent in the stress of manhood's rage :
The doom of old feudalities ?

II.

Will Freedom once more count her gains ?
Will outraged masses heed her calls,
And, firm of purpose, rend the thralls
And fetters of a race in chains ?

Can this be riff-raff hate of Law ?
Or slavery so debased the man
That bugle-blast and rataplan
Signal for Riot, not for War ?

Or, feudatory forces spent,
Do serfs behold with ravished eyes
The light of Freedom's dawn, and rise
Rejoicing in the glad portent ?

Or see with slumbrous gaze the gleams,
To take the sluggard's drowsy view,
And, folding arms, turn to renew
The sorc'ry of beguiling dreams ?

Has alien rule their souls debauched,
Accepting fate, nor wroth nor shamed,
Where unmarred manhood would have flamed
Like rick and harvest riot-torched ?

As if the war-drum's loud alarms,
Its rhythmic throb and wild tattoo,
Were but a mirthful mob's halloo,
And not a fervid call to arms ?

III.

Resigned to darkness, will they cast
Their blinkard-eyes on light and rail,
Or, roused to loftier aims, prevail
Against the slave's ignoble past ?

Frenzied with Power's long abuse,
The doors of mercy on them shut,
Do they arise resolved to put
Their helot thews to Freedom's use ?

Seeing her dayspring rout the gloom,
And all their wrongs, as phantoms dire,
Fleeing like herds from prairie fire,
To perish in predestined doom ;

They whom an empire, ruthless strong,
By tithe and tax and wanton wars,
To outrage, spoil and greed, no pause,
Have maddened with inhuman wrong,

To whom the hate of despot brings
Revolt to break their galling chain,
And summons manhood back again,
Ere throttled in the clutch of kings ;

Awaiting not the law's repeal,
Which might a milder sway ordain,
But steeled no longer to remain
Coerced, beneath the iron heel,

Have now submission's limits reached,
And slave, transfigured to the Man,
Make Insurrection lead their van,
Marching with Havoc's hounds unleashed,

In undrilled Riot's huddled strife,
Where License reigns, and Law is dumb,
And individual rights succumb
With equities of civic life.

IV.

Is it a rascal rabble-trick ?
Is Freedom's purpose festered thus ?
And this mere sputum and the pus
Of ulcerous bodies politic,

Corrupt at heart ? their aim to rob,
To roister, ravage, loot and kill ;
Murder, the Sergeant of their drill,
Their force's Sovereign head, King Mob ?

Who would not have the wide world free
From Absolutism's reckless whims ;
And hear rejoicing " Sanctus " hymns
Of franchised hosts to Liberty ?

Loved Liberty ! man is not loth
To own Semitic cult for thee,
Thou threefold Holy Deity !
Freemen's " Lord God of Sabaoth."

While no base acts their aims betray,
This is not venal, but doth wear
Veridic Revolution's air :
Let Freedom bless the bold essay.

V.

She comes to judgment ! Sovereign Lords,
Anointed Kings, Khedives, Bashaws,
Satraps and Sultans, Kaisers, Tsars,
Caliphs and Khans, tyrannic hordes,

Beneath whose rod of mastery pine
A world of tributary souls,
Defenseless under loathed controls,
Mocking a godhead Right-Divine,

The days of expiation dawn !
Retributive upon her throne,
The lightnings belted at her zone,
Her straight brows trenched in righteous scorn—

She sits ; her clear, imperious eyes
Glowing with holy flame, which lights
Oppressive wrong, and thus invites
The verdict of her dread assize.

Or, ranging through the realms, her tread
Startles old empires and despair,
Makes cheeks of ruling tyrants wear
The blenching of a fateful dread.

VI.

Great mother of the earth's oppressed,
To thy sole refuge turn for aid,
The wronged, down-trodden and betrayed,
To be of thy true-cheer possessed.

Then comes the hour, for come it must,
When misrule bears such foul renown,
That sceptre and the triple crown
Roll in a world-wide battle dust.

These are but symbols ! still through these
Have come man's many woes and worst :
Both priest and king have proved accurst,
And sorrow's drafts drank to the lees.

VII.

Strange ! that laws judged by modern lights,
Mere Custom based on ancient wrong,
Should yet, maleficent and strong,
Be chronicled as vested rights ;

That Title, Privilege and Caste,
In Usurpation's womb conceived,
And birth in violence achieved,
Should rule us from the barb'rous past.

Homage exacted as a due
To an ancestral "What Has Been,"
The enforcement of an ancient lien
Upon the freedom of the New.

A parasitic vogue no less,
This servile sycophantic fawn
To bonded Midas ; trucklings borne
To Title—low-bred caddishness

Transmitted from past feudal days,
And now to Caste precedence trends :
Such bent needs drastic purge, to cleanse
Republics from Patrician sways.

VIII.

Though Biblic-gloze of slavery bar
The slave's revolt, be not perplexed ;
Presumptuous priestcraft forged the text :
For Freedom, strife is Holy War.

To Revolutions she has given
True warrant for revolt ; as though
An archangelic trump should blow
Authoritative right from Heaven.

Then as when earthquakes rend a realm,
And down through ravine, gulch and rent,
Structures unbased are headlong sent,
Mountains arise, and floods o'erwhelm ;

So when her tremors stir all hearts,
Yawn gulfs, from Right divorcing Wrong ;
Old tottering frauds, not over-strong,
Vanish in void ; Freethought upstarts.

Freethought ! strong utt'rance ! bold ideas !
Beneath whose firm, diffusive strength
Roll priestcrafts, creeds and thrones at length,
The mockery of enfranchised years.

IX.

They wake a tumult in the heart,
These despots of a life's brief hour,
With their fastastic freaks of power,
Forcing just rule and right apart ;

A God's indissoluble plan
Dishonored by besotted fools,
Whose Saturnalias of misrules
Debauch the manhood of the man.

When wrong makes civic progress halt,
And man's rule null, 'twill ever be
Brought clear to view, that he may see
Some broken Law of God the fault ;

A Law which cannot know divorce
From the God-purpose it enfolds.
Never to be repealed, it holds
Eternally effective force.

A truth for endless time enscrolled,
Results of His disprizèd laws,
Effects, as sternly following cause,
Were Cosmos back to Chaos rolled.

On wrongful act amend will hinge,
And Retribution's gates swing wide,
For efflux of that ruthless tide,
That baleful justice called Revenge.

When direful "Reigns of Terror" come,
And "Right Divine" and "Privilege"
Pay bloody tribute to the rage
Of the aroused, red-handed Slum ;

Then Crime holds Freedom as its fag,
While Riot masquerades as War,
With License in triumphal car,
And Liberty a murderous hag.

X.

Now hamlet, town, and seething mart,
A Revolution's force controls ;
The throbbing drums and carmagnoles,
Rhythmic with passion's wrathful heart.

The Babeled streets are swarmed, as when
Sounds the red revelry of war,
While yells and cursings, near and far,
Reveal the headlong rage of men.

A raucous clamor fills the air,
With hint of peril in its ring,
Harsh, truculent and menacing,
From mobs which threaten and which dare.

Discord by day each region roams,
A nameless dread pervades the nights,
Darkness made lurid with the lights
Of blazing ricks and flaming homes.

Men gaze with fierce, malignant stare,
In every face dread purpose lies ;
Mouths closed determinedly, and eyes
Spectral with hunger or despair.

Children anæmic, want-distressed,
And haggard mothers, carcass-thin,
Beg with a skull's horrific grin,
As if their deathful stint were jest.

No whining beggar's sniveled cant,
No cringing cadger's feigned distress,
But supplicating eyes, express
Famine's unutterable want.

All tender hearts compassion wrings,
For frenzy shows in varied ways ;
Some kneel in prayer, or in their craze
Curse God, and drop to die—poor things !

Scenes to bring tears and pale the cheek,
Unless one's soul is self-immersed,
Or with the cynic's nature cursed,
And heart as hard as Burmah-teak.

XI.

The masses, fierce and malcontent,
 So long from human rights estranged,
 Resolve to have subjection changed
By Battle's grim arbitrament.

Where'er despotic Force parades,
 There stern opposing Manhood stands
 And women flout its hireling bands
From roofs and bristling barricades.

Is this the mad, protesting shriek
 Of suffering peoples, roused at length
 To action, measuring wrathful strength
With that brute face that kept them weak?

Grave Discontent's disorder tends
 To broader issues ; gathering throngs,
 Inflamed by speech and martial songs,
Riot in Revolution ends.

And thus æsthetic form essays,
While crowds by swift accretion swell,
With hostile forces, equable,
And drilled in war's strategic ways.

Kingdoms by feud and faction rent,
From town and village, vale and holt,
Battalioned serfdoms in revolt,
These rustic legions supplement.

XII.

To free their race from slavery's ban,
Armies to battle-fields pass by,
To prove how Christ-like men can die,
In ransom of their brother-man.

In sullen bitterness with wrong,
Instinct with freedom's earnest bent,
Souls with envenomed passions rent,
With torrent purport speed along.

Throughout the night the stir is heard
Of tramping multitudes ; nor ceased
When the vague dawn-light in the east
Roused earliest chirp of waking bird.

When from the dusk evolved the day,
Onward still streams the human tide,
Afar and near, and spreading wide
O'er fell and field and dusty way.

The farmer from the half-ploughed soil,
The coulter in the furrow left,
The craftsman in his calling deft,
Drudges, in coarser forms of toil ;

From handicrafts of every turn,
From foundry, stithy, forge and mill,
From factory, furnace, loom and till,
Come yeomen, peasant, churl and kern.

Trade quits its counter, clerks their desks ;
Tailor on yardstick binds his shears,
And with him follow pikes and spears
Alike extempored, war's grotesques.

The weaver spurns his loom and thrums,
To web and shuttle gives the slip,
Marching in martial fellowship
With rabble from the teeming slums.

The miner hurries from the pit,
The smuttied collier shirks his work ;
The cook, with bold, belligerent jerk,
Unscabbards from the roast, the spit.

Beside the stripling, war-imbued,
Steps bookish-scholar, no more bowed ;
The city bully, bold and loud,
Now aptly in the hostile mood.

In labor's homely guise they come,
In all a warlike bent abounds,
While near and far-afield resounds
The loud tantara of the drum.

With "tally ho" some keep the pace,
As if the game were up and gone,
And cry of "yoiks" and winding horn
Were a "tantivy" to the chase.

XIII.

The fields are mantled green with May,
Yet hosts which tramp above that sod,
Come not to view the works of God
In springtide's radiant array—

But eyes with lurid glitter lit,
With volleyed shot, and bayonets fixed,
Striving, in battle-wrangle mixed,
To put God's image under it.

With sons of toil the hill-scarps swarm,
Not clad in gala-dress of war,
But every heart firm to the core,
And sombre as a rising storm.

The clamor of the forming crowd,
A muttering distant thunder seems ;
Their eager bayonets' restless gleams,
The lightning of that lurid cloud.

What fearlessness has Freedom lent
To them, so dareful-glad to die?
Once abject bondsmen, they defy
The power that seemed omnipotent.

Though battle-clang their requiem,
'Tis life—life of the baited slave—
That holds more terror than the grave,
More dread than sudden death to them.

XIV.

Embattled on the vantage-slopes
Of the free hills, their legions lure
A myriad eyes—the cynosure
And pole-star of a people's hopes ;

There, like inexorable Fates,
Their serried lines afar defined ;
Rude-weaponed—yet for war aligned,
Facing the foes that Freedom hates ;

Their smelted ploughshares wrought to guns :
When scythes as swords from scabbards leap,
They who have sown the wind will reap
The whirlwind ! so the adage runs.

For like a cloud-burst these will pour
Their levy on the hated foe,
In undammed cataclysmic flow,
With inundating rush and roar.

XV.

When Freedom like a power divine,
Turning the dew that wets the plain
Red with the blood of votaries slain,
The water once more changed to wine ;

The soil that the libation quaffs
Will ever be renowned for breed
Of valiant men and noble deed—
Such magic have her wizard drafts.

From action there is still surcease,
While on the slopes, which dew still wets,
Glint, meteor-like, the bayonets,
Where Freedom holds her fortalice.

From ranks now mute no sound is heard
Above the voices of command,
In tragic preparation stand
The columns which await "the word."

XVI.

The vision changes! On the plains
An onslaught rages fierce and fell,
The uproar of a dread pell-mell,
Where men are fiends, and torment reigns.

The sylvan landscape, dew impearled,
With nature's sorrow seems tear-wet,
Veiled tragedies, by sight unmet,
In fire-mist of battle furled.

The file-fires of the legions flash,
And, 'neath the tread of hostile men,
The meadows lie a quaggy fen
With wild-flowers in a sodden splash.

The scene grim havoc's home appears,
With shot-ploughed pastures, fallowed leas,
Torn woodland groves, whose wounded trees,
Weeping their hurt, shed ambered tears,

Blight, waste and ruin, near and far,
Ravage and devastation dire,
Soil swept as by a prairie fire ;
All sylvan charm dispelled by war ;

The vale and meadow, moor and heath,
Stamped deep with desolation's brand,
Battle and Murder's Promised Land,
A trysting-place of Man, with Death !

XVII.

The limpid stream that wound along,
 Melodious in its sinuous run,
 A liquid Memnon, which the sun
Seemed to have touched to endless song,

Lies swamped throughout its placid bed,
 Pent up in pools its minstrel flow,
 Its meadow-course a dismal slough,
Its ferns and mosses guled with red.

Disks of the daisies, vermeil-dyed,
 Their ivoried rays now death-like white—
 In dabbled grass a piteous sight—
With paler dead lie side by side.

XVIII.

The brazen tubes of bugles blare,
 And, like a strident storm of steel,
 I see the dragoons charge, and reel
Before the volleying hollow square.

Dense, serried ranks meet the assault,
And as when billows smite the bluff,
Baffled, recoil at its rebuff,
And, like spent force, collapse or halt ;

They halt, retreat, reform, recharge ;
Again the deadly volleys sound ;
The unhorsed, bleeding, strike the ground,
Their steeds, unreined, fly wild, at large.

A decimated force reforms
To breast that death-evolving square,
And, in heroic frenzy, dare
The blizzards of its leaden storms.

With rowels dripping red, these ride ;
Upon their saddles bending low,
As if saluting Death, they go,
For freedom will not be denied.

XIX.

Slain horses heaped in battle's stress,
Serve "coignes of vantage" for a few
To force the foremost files, and hew
A pathway for the rearward press.

From mounded slain their horses span
The bristling space with mighty leaps ;
Crushing the line in mangled heaps,
Its bayonets goring horse and man.

The barrier yields, thus brayed and trussed,
While, through the swirl of smoke and murk,
The sabres flash relentless work,
Aided by pike and spear-head thrust.

A stalwart few with hearts aflame,
Against outnumbering forces hurled,
Make records that amaze the world—
Hewing a bloody path to fame.

Like pioneers in wildwoods free,
With score and mark and boles laid low,
These through the human jungle go—
Blazing a road to Liberty. \

The broken square, in wild mêlée,
Engirt as by a garrot-belt
Of pike and sabre, sink and melt,
As snowflakes in a scrolling sea.

Strewed lie the wounded, heaped the slain,
Within those lines so torn and trenched
By battle-bolts, and storms that drenched
The summer dust with purple rain.

XX.

The loud-lunged cannon's seismic shocks,
The hurly-burly of the war,
By peaceful herdsmen heard afar
As roar of seas on basalt rocks ;

The scud of battle's murk and rack,
Sweeping o'er fields to distant shires,
Goads in King Mob restrained desires
For foray, plunder, rape and sack.

Clamor enhanced by stert'rous lungs,
By hoot and gibe and ribald shouts,
By quip and sneer and scoffing flouts,
A frenzied tournament of tongues ;

The ring of sabres, helmets split,
The bayonet's fret in struggle locked ;
The rush, the roar, the brave hearts shocked
By death-cries of their comrades, hit ;

The *ping* of bullets, rifle-spced,
The *swish* of balls, the *screech* of shells,
The savage dash and demon yells
Of ranks when they behold their dead !

Impetuous hoofs the earth affray
When reinforcements hurtle past,
And as before the stormwhirl blast,
The rooted ranks, like forests, sway.

Colliding masses undulate,
Embattled forces ebb and flow,
Fortune, perplexed to which side go,
Swayed by a vacillating Fate.

XXI.

When seas, gale-driven, raid the land,
Fretting away the beveled beach,
Thrust deltas in the shallow's reach,
Spread out the bluffs as spongy sand,

And littoral lines deflect their trend,
Thus, in the fight's infuriate tide,
When tragic multitudes collide,
The files of battle swerve and rend,

Losing their rectilinear form,
As foe-ward rolls the raging coil ;
And dead and dying fleck the soil,
As flotsam wreck, tossed up by storm.

Behold where firing-files have curved,
In coast-line undulations bent ;
Here looped in gulfs, there prominent,
Where a bluff boldness never swerved,

And all the interspaces wide,
Hillocked with battle's jetsam, spread
In shapes of moribund and dead,
There left, as by a reflux tide !

XXII.

Down before thrust of lance or pike,
With churl and clown, the noble goes ;
Their blood in red conjunction flows—
Sweet saints in heaven ! they look alike !

Pity from human hearts has fled,
While uncloyed rage takes brutal shapes,
And, as the wine-press crushes grapes,
Behold the vintage of the dead !

Red in the lurid sunshine flood,
The brandished sabres flash and hack,
Raging in fury of attack—
A Seljuck sateless lust of blood.

And now the heavy guns assail,
And rank and file and columns gape
Before the hurtle of the grape,
Before the bursting shell's mitraille.

In jungle-growth, awaiting chance,
Swart ambushed fiends lie crouching low,
Till on the foremost ranks of foe
Their storm of metal checks advance.

Loud roar defiant throats of doom,
Shrill battle-cries and bugle-calls ;
The bursting shrapnel-shards and balls,
Staining the soil with crimson rheum,

Spread Murder's fratricidal reign :
Fear-blind, unmastered horses tread,
Hoofs to the fetlocks, dripping red,
With reek and carnage of the plain.

Of Bedlam scenes, no lull, no lack !
Horrors through all the blood-lust run
Orgies of slaughter—every one
A homicidal maniac.

XXIII.

The wounded strew the hill and heath,
In anguished eyes a look of hate ;
While some, in stoic calmness, wait
The crowning dignity of death—

Death for a good mankind will share,
Death on the crucial field of strife ;
Yielding their manhood, love and life,
Casting their all in fealty there.

Some, cursing despots, ere they die
Cheer onset with their failing breath,
For Freedom's triumph, counting Death
A synonym of Victory.

To others, gently does it come,
As if a beatific dream
Brought childhood back, and, smiling, seem
To hear the cradle-songs of home.

All sights, all sounds are types of dread :
The yells of hate when comrades die,
The terrored horses' horrent cry,
Their hot hoofs trampling the cold dead.

XXIV.

While ranks with equal forces cope,
And vapor veils the lower land,
Those rude battalions waiting stand
Unleashed upon the upland slope,

Though imminent the conflict swells,
Their stubborn forces ruffled not,
Though fretted with the whistling shot,
And harried by the shrieking shells.

And far-afield, on left and right,
On that Aceldama of Death,
A mist hangs poised, a cloud-land wraith,
The vapored demon of the fight !

But now, as on the lethal plain
Death harvests in their brother-ranks,
And blattering Gatlings mow their flanks,
As scythemen in the August grain,

Restraint no longer balks desire ;
For, all alight, their sombre line,
Lit by their volleying musket-shine,
From flanks to centre frilled with fire,

Sends red-disaster on the foe,
Ere in the tragic chaos mixed,
With muskets leveled, bayonets fixed,
To check advancing files, they go ;

XXV.

While aiding forces, ambush-screened,
Hidden by schistous-rock and heath,
Pour unremitted streams of death
From deadly rifles magazined.

Then sounds the bugled "Charge !" and all
Their thousands, as an unit wrought,
Their weapons from the shoulder brought,
Down to the horizontal fall ;

And on the foemen loping, leap
In "double-quick," with shout and whoop,
As unjessed hawks on quarry swoop,
Made deadly from their downward sweep.

As waters stored in tarn or pond,
By brimming affluents, freshet-fed,
Rise swirling, foaming, gathering head,
At last burst dike, and, freed from bond,

Rush with relentless havoc down
The valley's slant, and in their tide
Spread death and desolation wide,
To homestead, hamlet, thorp and town ;

So from the hill-slopes where they stood,
On and over the roaring plains,
As torrents flushed by boisterous rains,
They dash, a flashing, thund'rous flood !

The fields are deluged left and right,
As onward, in marauding leap,
Obstructions vanish in their sweep,
In maelstrom vortices of fight.

Steel sun-bursts in the lurid hordes
Like lightnings play in rising storm,
As following horsemen charge and swarm,
A hurricane of flashing swords.

Unchecked, unbaffled, they o'erride
Burrock and dyke, as human checks,
Till all the fields are strewn with wrecks,
As seashores stormed at full springtide.

A cataract ! no pause it knows ;
No bulkhead barrier balks the flood ;
But on, incarnadined with blood,
Its course in mad vendetta flows.

XXVI.

Ere yet in flux full force prevails,
Its onward coming some espy,
And, terror'd by its onrush, fly
Like swirling leaves in autumn gales ;

While others, non-contentious, stood,
Engrossed, and to amazement stirred,
That vital movement seen, and heard
The roar of its relentless flood.

More dread than ocean's tidal reel,
Turbid with deep-sea ooze, to set
At naught all human force or let—
This, crowned with foam of tossing steel.

XXVII.

The turf takes lavish tints of red ;
To bayonet-lunge and savage shout
The foremost lines recoil in rout,
And broader strewn the field with dead.

Pitiless force ! a ravening brute !
Its jungle-hunger keen from fast,
So leaps the fold, and carnage vast
Attests a tigerish glut of loot.

For not a face which, scowled and grim
With an unsated hate, but seals
Some foeman's fate with blows he deals,
As Death strides hand-in-hand with him.

For all the accreted wrongs of Might
Find hate-expression in their acts :
Measure for measure ! nothing lacks,
And Vengeance revels as Delight.

Retired forces still intact,
Beholding assured doom abroad,
Scorn flight, and though to silence awed,
Await unmoved the dread impact.

Then to the onslaught's ruthless trend
A solstice pause—a breathless hush—
As prelude to the frenzied rush,
When stubborn lines of battle bend

And break : then Havoc, thus let loose,
Holds Molock by the free red hand,
With Slaughter, of the triune band,
Proclaiming neither halt nor truce.

The centre pierced, the fight is won ;
The huddled flanks in panic halt,
Confronted by oblique assault
From file on file in echelon.

Before a tyrant-hating race
Some hireling troops fly far-afield,
Or to the free-born yeomen yield,
Trusting to Freedom's lenient grace.

XXVIII.

And now the bugles sound recall,
And, in the blurred and blood-red sun
(Endorsement of the action done,
With promised darkness as its pall),

A sullen veil of powder-cloud
Moves slowly leeward from the plain,
Revealing dying and the slain,
And wounded men in anguish bowed.

Now swells a fierce exultant tone,
As Conquest to the cities comes,
Welcomed in flames of blazing homes—
Then silence, where the hearths are lone !

* * * * *

The 'larums of the conflict cease ;
The bugle and tempestuous drum,
The cannon's rending uproar, dumb—
All folded in the hush of peace,

As if a cataract's flood should pour
 To depths abyssmal, suddenly ;
 Leaving its air-born din to be
A tingling silence—nothing more ;

All sound engulfed in stillness vast,
 Yet haunted by a tumult's thrill
 Once heard, and hearing weirdly still,
The phantom-roar of battle past—

Delusions which our griefs create,
 When, heart-bereaved, we seem to hear
 The household stir of dead and dear,
Knowing the home is desolate.

The fields from battle clamor free,
 The woodland birds, on venturous wing,
 O'er the sad meadows poise and sing :
Nature's unconscious irony !

As specks, beyond the murk of war,
 That veiled blood-sodden soil below
 Gier-falcon, lazar-kite and crow,
Scenting the festal carcass, soar.

XXIX.

If subject peoples would be free,
Then every weapon's astral glint
Should prove a herald-star, to hint
Where lies redeeming liberty.

Low sinks the sun ; the day is done ;
Though silent now the battle's rave,
Its shot-torn, raveled banners wave,
Proclaiming Freedom's purpose won.

'Mid tattered standards, shattered files,
Haggard and gapped victorious bands,
Paled by their pathos, Freedom stands,
And, in her holy triumph, smiles !

She smiles on one whose dying grip
A havocked staff, of flag bereft,
Sustains : a ribboned remnant left,
Of Peril's fearful fellowship.

An omened sight to look upon,
Nimbused in sunset's after-glow—
Those shredded buntings' rippled flow,
Riddled to shapes of gonfalon !

XXX.

No bugled boast ! no vaunting fife !
War's blood-shot vision grown more calm ;
Each ravaged flag an Oriflamme
Floating above a " Holy Strife."

Up from the underworld arise
The sombre shades of daylight's pall ;
And vesper-shadows softly fall,
As closing lids o'er weary eyes.

The tragic field grows weird and wan
As twilight deepens o'er the slave,
Who gave to Freedom life God gave,
Made worthless by the crime of man.

Night falls apace . On field of dread
The pale moon looks, as if in pain,
Where foes on foes lie swathed like grain :
Grim windrows of ungarnered dead.

Mothers, obeying Love's behests,
Within death's cold, impassive grasp,
In piteous mockery, seem to clasp
Their babes to unsustaining breasts,

Or to a vital anguish yield,
O'er form of daughter, dead, defiled ;
While wife distraught, and homeless child,
Roam, moaning, o'er the woeful field.

The slaughter ended, vampire bands
Render the lull of horrors brief.
After the victor skulks the thief,
And corpses stripped by hideous hands.

War ever sows its rueful path
For gruesome product, Science saith ;
A harvest-time of dole and death,
With " Typhoid " as an aftermath.

Oh righteous cause, but fateful day !
I look through tears upon the plain.
Accursèd War ! Oh piteous slain !
They're brothers all ! hush ! come away.

* * * * *

XXXI.

When 'gainst mild rule the rabble plot,
And riff-raff riot stalks abroad,
Dons Phrygian cap, girds Spartan sword,
Great Freedom's forehead flushes hot,

As shamed to feel her aims profaned,
Seeing men so pervert her trust,
Claiming her aid with lips of lust,
With hearts so foul and guilt-ingrained.

Lay not your unregenerate hands
Upon the ark of her pure cause,
Feigning the acts of righteous wars,
Lest lightnings scathe your impious bands.

If, Freedom, in thy hallowed name,
Grim Insurrection, gathering head,
From realm to realm, incentive spread
To souls who lack thy sacred flame,

And, prompted by a senseless hate
Of social laws which bind the race
In civic virtue's linked embrace,
Invite an anarchistic state,

Smite the blasphemers ! putting down
The right arm of revolt, and stay
The demagogue's seditious sway,
That falsifies thy fair renown.

XXXII.

For Freedom's state is not sustained
By brawling malcontents, nor bands
That Riot breeds, and Mob commands,
Nor wrongs of despotisms, feigned ;

Nor slaves accepting slavery's shame ;
But, protest spurned, petition mocked,
Revolt in Freedom's cradle rocked,
With Freedom seal eternal claim.

If, sanctified by Her pure fires,
They rise to have their wrongs redressed,
Encourage heart ! embolden breast !
Make keen the blade for their desires !

Let holy madness thrill their veins,
Till through their cause such passion runs
That widows arm their only sons,
And slaves brain tyrants with their chains ;

And despots learn how dread a thing
It is to rouse a people's hate,
Choosing to balk predestined fate,
Shunning the perilled state of King—

A title freemen will not trust,
Held by the brotherhood of men,
As by the compeered citizen—
Preposterous claim for equal dust !

Rarely from crime have Sovereigns shrunk
When subject to the priest's intent ;
The Crown before the Mitre bent ;
Monarch, to coadjutor monk ;

Coördinating royal plans
With those of Churchdom's evil sway,
For man's oppression ; every way
Its ignominious partisans.

All tyrannies have myrmidons,
Scum-mercenaries, whom they pay,
For murder at so much a day,
And raping mothers, slaught'ring sons ;

The realms perplexed, with feud and schism
'Twixt royal greed and public weal ;
A people's rule constrained to deal,
At last, with clearest absolutism.

XXXIII.

While strife and faction threatening swarm
 Around the Old World's feudal holds,
 What blest tranquillity enfolds
My own dear land amid the storm !

Starward with ever changeless gaze,
 Progressing in her path benign,
 Visioned with some predestined fine,
Undreamed in childhood's primer days ;

Casting the larval-shell of birth
 From pupa-chrysalid, to rise,
 Winged for a flight of high emprise,
Among the potencies of earth ;

In good, ascendant 'mong mankind,
 Holding a cheering light, whose ray
 Of Nadir-night makes Zenith day,
And freedom sought for all to find.

XXXIV.

When nations, weary of the cant
Of the dogmatic pietist,
And, made by culture, wise, resist
The claims of the Hierophant,

And ruthless rule fails to divorce,
From honored labor, half its store ;
And peaceful masses dwell no more
Will-shackled in the grip of force ;

Then feuds will perish, wars will cease,
Freedom invoked, a God adored,
And all mankind, in full accord,
Chant pæans to perpetual peace.

The birth of love and kindly laws,
And loud the people's anthem swells,
Melodious riot of the bells
Aiding humanity's applause.

XXXV.

Though now, not vexed with war, like these,
Nor Insurrection's vandal rage,
Who knows that thy historic page
May not claim grave appendices ?

Thou'rt Freedom's Life-Guard, yet forsworn ;
For Slavery, like pyæmic taint,
Poisons thy force, and thou art faint,
Like a young Samson lewdly shorn.

Thy foes are internecine ! Dense,
Myopic blindness ! not to see
Th' antithesis of Liberty
That stultifies thy proud pretense.

Their bonds of Union do not bind !
Trusting in Freedom's home to bide,
And make their Slave-Colossus stride
Athwart the Haven of mankind.

Not these alone the foes to heed,
Nor worst of despots gun and sword ;
Chief among thralls, and most abhorred,
The bondage of Belief and Creed.

* * * * *

XXXVI.

INTERLOCUTORY.

The world is full of noble deeds,
The Doers' paths rose-leaved with Fame ;
No primrosed ones my days may claim,
Brambled and pranked with idlest weeds.

If God, my purpose blessing, would
Look kindly on the grain I sow,
Scattered in human hearts, to grow
And ripen for the general good,

Blessing my brother-man, then I,
Cheering my joyless years, may boast
I helped through life, my uttermost,
To slay a God-dishonoring Lie.

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To slay a God-dishonoring Lie.

To no malignancy inclined,
But done to cure distorted lives,
And, like the surgeon's probes and knives,
Though seeming cruel, yet are kind.

And earth might never more hear prate
The Pulpit's strategists of fraud,
Their blasphemies denounced and scored
With everlasting human hate.

XXXVII.

The Church is gospel-armed, and rife
With equipage for human woe,
Wide-jawed for prey, the deadliest foe
Of larger intellectual life.

Humanity's uncultured throng,
Debauched and credulous, sustains
Its tumored Lie, which now remains
Th' imposthume of an embossed wrong.

From hence aborts a dangerous breed,
Debarred from culture, bound to stay,
Through ignorance, the spoil and prey
Of sacerdotal guile and greed ;

A state whose sequents none can gauge,
Holding, in ever procreant prime,
Germs of venality and crime,
To stain the annals of the age.

XXXVIII.

Must Superstition ever blind
Humanity to Truth, and laud
Gross records of a barbarous horde
As God's revealments to mankind?

Are there no tyrannies but thrones ?
Beneath the Priest's empiric rule,
Believing man—weak, hood-winked fool !—
In abject bondage, trusts and groans.

Are there no slaves save those who wear
Fetters of metal? Faith will breed
Helots of dogma, cult and creed :
Are such less worthy Freedom's care ?

Bankrupt of life's delights, to go
Scourged to their graves by human ill,
Slaves of the priest's relentless will,
Ruled by a Christ-masked ruthless foe.

Must faith in falsehood still be kept,
Though cultured Prejudice assign
To an Intelligence Divine
The fraud of Priests, in guile adept ?

How long will generations heed
The fictions filched from Pagan store,
To be their manual evermore,
And guidance in their utmost need ?

XXXIX.

From immemorial solitude
Of prehistoric times there ran
Babble of paleolithic man—
The unshamed races of the nude—

Which, in the course of æons, came,
Through Star, and Sun, and Serpent cult,
And grosser worships, to result
At last in an Akkadian frame

Of allegoric gospel ; planned
By Astrologic Holy-Sees,
With esoteric mysteries,
Which few could ever understand

(Thus all discovery defy),
To be “God’s Word,” and so rule earth,
Throughout its peopled length and girth,
WITH A CHICANE, PRESUMPTUOUS LIE !

Then back, from alien bonds unbound,
Came Israel from the Orient,
With dreams of shekel cent-per-cent,
To Zion, and marts trade-renowned.

Still in inherent bondage held
By habits they could not ignore,
They tricked their God and Biblic lore
In "outfit" of moth-eaten Eld.

"Old clothes" of Babylonian myth,
Bartered when slaves, Chaldean-made,
The staple of that stock-in-trade,
Religion now is costumed with.

XL.

In astronomic mythos bides
The secret of that knavish plan,
Wherewith the priest befools the man—
A scheme which Allegory hides.

Of Pagan deities no lack !

As sun-types in the cults of old,
Gods in mutation signed and rolled
Throughout the girdling Zodiac.

Messiahs, Buddhas, every one
Of all the gods to Pagans known,
Pass o'er the constellated zone,
Precessioned as th' incarnate sun.

And Christs have come and passed like these :
Such Gentile allegories wrought
God-ävatars by mythos brought,
Circling through cyclic Neroses.

And on the globe's solstitial-cross,
There crucified, and sepulchred
In Winter's dark, find death deferred,
To rise in Life's redeeming force.

Here the Christ-fable seems to be
To its inception clearly traced :
The scheme of man's salvation based
On spurious myth-typology.

The Sun-god Christ's career thus given
In signs zodiacal ; and there
The stars the gospel fraud lay bare—
The fable found, sun-typed in heaven !

Conspicuous truth to him who weighs
Belief in reason's scales, and drilled
In allegoric lore, or skilled
In metaphor of by-gone days.

To every faith on Earth that's been
The Sun-God is the master-key,
Unlocking every mystery
From Brahma to the Nazarene.

Thus on veiled fact delusion feasts,
And thrives, till Truth's shekinah comes,
And, with its radiant presence, dooms
The dismal Dynasty of Priests.

Fooled by a God-revealed pretence,
Making man's gross imaginings
His gospel-falsity of things,
Acts of Divine Intelligence—

A Church, established on that base,
Becomes a potency in wrong,
With guile and fraudulency strong,
To blind, enslave, degrade the race.

XLI.

Are martyred "masses" doomed to die,
Of half the charms of life bereaved,
And, ever trusting, be deceived
BY ONE INTERMINABLE LIE?

Of one more evil to beware
With which th' unstinted world is rife;
To quicksands on the shores of life
One more illusion, one more snare?

Through brake and quickset, graveward plod?
Is Justice lapped in indolence,
And niggard of Omnipotence
Etheric Force which man calls God?

A creed whereby the Christian views
 (Through bigotry's demented whim)
 As *truth*, that suffering pleasures him,
And therefore baits his chosen Jews.

This graceless monster to endure
 A sore affront to common sense ;
 From loathing him, the abstinence,
Merit to make Salvation sure.

XLIII.

To any Heaven, a sheer disgrace :
 By an allotment wrongly made,
 It should have been reversed instead,
And Hell's archangel in his place.

Though doubtful if Apollyon well
 Could suffer long such sing-song fate ;
 But, hating dullness, abdicate
In favor of more cheerful hell.

Against such Gorgons reason wars.
Abhorrent to the cultured thought !
Yet by gross-minded priestcraft wrought
As imaging Primordial Cause.

A dream that vulgar mind controls,
Where ignorance holds cruel sway ;
Such scarecrow Gods weak hearts affray—
The nightmares of unwakened souls.

Yet Christians such belief avow—
Religion in which scholars trace
The tokens of a breech-clout race :
Is Demon worship extant now ?

A worthier god "Isaiah" planned,
And "Micah," than a fiend like this,
The Demon of the Genesis,
By all unbiased natures banned.

XLIV.

When through the weird primeval seas,
That, Chaos-born, knew yet no calm,
Hideous-Octopodiæ swam,
With Saurian monstrosities ;

And reptiles of Jurassic times
Swarmed land, swam seas and winged the air,
If embryo man coeval were
With forms of Oölitic slimes ;

The inborn "god-idea," unripe,
Might in the protoplasmic mind
Favor a Mesozoic kind,
A god of Jehovistic type.

By Evolution's laws expressed
In the brute man, this God evolved,
From all divine allure absolved,
A free development's arrest.

Pantheons of like grade have thus
To the black ranks of falsehood fled,
All, metaphorically, dead
As Pharaoh of the Exodus.

Beshrew such bestial gods and grim !
The Man, with gentle manhood fraught,
Is nearer to Divineness brought
Than Yahveh or the Elohim.

XLV.

Must God to mortals ever be
Anthropomorphic to their view?
The simulacrum of a Jew,
Made monster by theanthropy?

Concept of Deity, alloyed
By mixing in the barb'rous plan
The savage prehistoric man,
Evolved from Pithecanthropoid.

God-modeling Priests, do you not see,
In matrix pouring man and myth,
In flux with godhead, you therewith
Have cast a pagod prodigy?

Gross moulding art! vile plastic plan!
The human still in brutish grade,
With mythic god amalgamed, made
A most ungodly god for man.

Could naught but brutal falsehood quell
Man's errant nature? naught else lead
To virtue, and to goodly deed,
But horrors of prospective hell?

Is *his* a love to emulate?
Or justice, that this Ghoul decrees
For error, *endless agonies*,
Which is but an eternized hate?

'Tis not the laic soul that feasts
On visions of unending pain
For erring man; such hatreds reign
Alone in demon-hearts of Priests.

For Priests, since man's *invented* fall
For human childhood and its prime,
Have fashioned gods in every clime,
And typefied themselves in all.

XLVI.

From finite limits ne'er exempt,
Can mortal man life's mystery solve?
Or, from this God in vogue, evolve
A loving Father?—vain attempt !

There is no God like this, abhorred ;
None, save in the degraded mind ;
Falsehood and cruelty combined,
With its base passions in accord.

Vile parody of Power Supreme !
Which, by a cozening sect portrayed,
Has blasphemed God, fooled man, and made
Religion but a Bedlam dream ;

A fable schemed by priestly arts
In days of ignorance and lust ;
A monster that excites disgust.
Not worship of the loving hearts ;

No loftier aim than power and pelf
And arbitrary rule to win ;
A priest-made god of human kin,
The image of his beastlier self.

XLVII.

Who dare to mock *The Lord of Truth*,
Proclaiming love for gods like this ?
A Heaven of mere psalm-singing bliss ;
Hell, to fill fiends with tearful ruth.

Shameless imposture ! strangely odd
That man, of Reason justly proud,
Should be in supplication bowed,
Before this most preposterous god.

Subvert the idol ! straighten knees !
Erect, arise and kneel before
A Presence worthier to adore
Than fabricated gods like these !

Above such morbid horrors rise !
Pretendedly beloved—as true :
This Mumbo-Jumbo of the Jew !
Th' embodied form of gross surmise.

XLVIII.

Wherein have we the right to boast,
Or Anthropophagi revile,
Breed of some lone Pacific isle—
Or Kongo's, or Biaffra's coast,

In making hideous gods, expert ?
Who worship one with fervid air,
Till, unpropitious to their prayer,
They daub its camoised nose with dirt ?

As well that human faith should be
In Molock of the bloody rites,
Or Demon of Gehenna's lights,
Or goat-hoofed Pan of Arcady ;

In Gods of Battle, Gods of Peace,
In Siva, Vishnoo, Baal and Bel,
In negroid Buddha, and as well
In all the rabble gods of Greece.

From Egypt's clime, as fair results,
Seràpis, Isis, Apis, Ra,
Osiris, or the Latin Lar,
Penàtes of the household cults,

As well in Obi and Voodoo,
Or Theurgy and magic runes,
In cantrip, thaumaturgic tunes,
The fetish-rites of Timbuctoo ;

As well to crossed-legged Brahma bow,
Or Punjab-gods for Sakti's sake,
The Lingam, Yoni and the Snake,
And reverence the Holy Cow ;

As to the phantoms, priest-devised,
To fright the souls of simple men,
Making the human mind a den
Of monsters apotheosized.

XLIX.

For Christianity creates
No longer faith that binds and blinds
The large majority of minds,
Save those of marked degenerates.

Cored with an astrologic pith
Of sun-god worship : swathed and rolled
In cere-cloth of beliefs of old :
The embalmed mummy of a Myth.

Yet if, in this more cultured age,
Some show hereditary taint,
Faith is but hypocritic feint,
Masking a coward vassalage ;

Or issue of the pious kind
Of fable dealt to innocence ;
While flaccid yet its waxing sense,
Stamped on the child's receptive mind.

L.

Man knoweth not the Primal Cause
In blind Hyrcynian mazes hid,
Which nothing mortal e'er will thrid
To find the Image he implores.

To vestal heights of mountains flee,
Pour out thy soul in tearful prayer,
Yearning to know if God be there,
Yearning to know what God may be.

Search endless space and time, and steep
Thy heart in lovingness, and call—
Where art Thou, God? From each and all,
Silence unutterably deep.

Outvoice the controversial roar
Of ocean tempested ; and let
Concurrent Universe abet
The questioning—thou'lt hear no more.

In painful longing be not led,
Tortured by an expectant ear,
An answering voice thou wilt not hear,
Though thou wert patient as the dead.

In atoms to the Cosmos wrought,
In mind, in matter, light and air,
In all that is, and everywhere,
HE IS—impalpable as thought.

LI.

Can Finite grasp the Infinite,
Gaze on transcendencies that dim
The vision of the Cherubim,
Who, while adoring, veil their sight ?

As vain for human mind to guess
Abstraction's form, as to expand
Eternity ; or understand
An unhorizoned Nothingness.

The Inconceivable by Man !
Essence of Space ! Primord'nate Law,
Limitless Energy ! before
Matter's Eternity began.

Of Him we cannot postulate
Relation with nor Time nor Space,
Delusions of our mortal race,
Mere fictions of a finite state !

His all-pervading essence sent
Through His Majestic Universe,
Cognate with substance most diverse :
In every atom immanent.

Beyond Imagination's reach !
To Man, unthinkable as light
To the "born-blind," or human sight
To simple mollusk on the beach.

Beyond the concept or the thought
Of earthly or seraphic mind,
Vain all ambitious search to find
Creative Power, the Godhead sought.

Though all things perish, He no less
Remains pure Spirit, 'biding Love,
Whose arcane influences move
Through Nature's steadfast Everness.

LII.

Speechless with reverence I stand,
O Thou transcendently Obscure ;
Almighty ! Pitilessly Pure !
Godhead's superlative of Grand.

With bastard births the age is thronged,
And creed-born malformations live,
With God, as Father putative,
His name by such abortions wronged.

To this, true Culture crieth truce !
No longer should the earth defame
His should-be-honored Holy Name,
By service in ignoble use,

Whose hallowed attributes to teach,
Priesthoods are but as senseless stocks.
His infinite Perfection mocks
Their stunted knowledge, thought and speech.

LIII.

Stated in aphorism terse,
Man's glory is in "pride of place" !
For he with Him stands face to face :
GOD IS HIMSELF THE UNIVERSE.

Finite holds no divining-rod
For searching Infinite ; and He
Is no objective entity :
NATURE'S TOTALITY IS GOD !

Yet, till the soul, immaculate,
Purged of all carnate grossness, stands
Pure spirit 'mid pure Spirit bands,
In loftiest archangelic state ;

Until the faculties are held,
By which that soul can measure space,
The confines of th' Eternal trace,
The human paradox dispelled,

Through epochs of progression, show
No taint of matter's crass control
Upon the pure discarnate soul,
Can it the God, the Father, know.

None drawing vital breath, as one
Cere-clothed in mortal flesh, jejune,
The human larva's coarse cocoon !
In gross materialism spun,

And claimed as pabulum by Death,
Who through his limitations views
His God's moralities—a Jew's—
And brutal creeds his shibboleth,

From Fetish on to Fetish plods,
Evolving Deity of varied plan,
In workmanship no better than
Mud idols of the Rajpoot Gods.

LIV.

Assoil me, Abba ! Thou art just !
Nearer to be to Thee my goal,
Attained by my progressive soul
Through paths of wonder, love and trust.

In merciless lucidity
All hearts lie open to Thy view ;
We know Thou lookest us thro' and thro':
THOU ART, WHAT THOU ALONE CANST BE.

Baffled, in human helplessness,
Within imagination's scope
Thou art not, yet we wondering grope
With hearts insatiate : ALL IS GUESS !

Dreaming my spirit part of Thine,
This body, wondrous fashioned clay !
Must humbly go its mortal way,
My soul absorbed in the Divine ;

Or its evolving force succeeds
The heights of being to explore,
Standing immaculate before
THE ETERNAL WILL ; where sequence leads,

Beholding Universes wound
In Evolution's endless chain ;
Interdependent, to remain
Ever in Altruism bound.

Through termless time, in bourneless space,
Cognate with boundless floods of soul
That countless Universes roll,
Progressive, to behold His face.

LV.

Lacking the spirit-sight to see,
Blind, on a wonder-deep I drift ;
Heart-grateful for the sensuous gift
That lets me feel *His Sovereignty*.

The world is full of wrong and strife,
Yet patiently I draw my breath ;
Since He has made the dust of death
The breath of everlasting life,

In spiritual spheres of bliss,
Exempt from carnate wrong and hate :
But love with love commensurate—
As balm for pain endured in this.

Gladdened with hope no longer dim,
Godward and goodward ; without stain,
Immaculate at last, to gain
Transcendent joy beholding Him.

LVI.

Are priests Thy earthly agencies?
Christ hated Pharisees who preach :
A delegated mouthpiece each,
Of Thy Consummate Wisdom—these ?

Enormity of bold pretence !
Immeasurable blasphemy !
Boundless presumption ! which must be—
To the Creator—grave offence !

No “ Hypostatic Union,” His !
Or the man-element in Him
Would wreck their papal Sanhedrim
With Love’s most rude antithesis.

And, bliss in Heaven growing weak,
The saints might pretermite their lays,
Cheer dullness with delighted gaze
On antics of their simian clique.

Who could foresee their destined fate
Were God like their Judaic Joss ?
Partaking of the Anthropos,
A vicious gaseous-vertebrate ?

The pismires in the garden walks,
The wise-eyed Owls in ivy-tod,
Know quite as much as they of God,
For all their cant and verbiage talks.

Have their lips th' anointing chrism,
Explaining Bible-themes, perplexed,
And as " Thy Word " affirm the text
In all its odious literalism ?

Giving trite-truths perverting trends
To suit a preconceived intent ;
And quadrate with the priestly bent,
A selfish means to sordid ends ;

Perverting man's instinctive sense
Of sacred truth by Jesuit guile,
Through every form of fraud and wile
Making mentality more dense ;

Or theorems of God advance
As guides through doctrinal morass,
Illumined by mephitic gas
From cess and slough of ignorance ;

Or with dogmatic precepts prod
Doubters in paths to true belief
Of their crass bigotries : as if
Creeds were love-philters for their God.

LVII.

In vain *their Sacred Order Caste*
On blockhead skulls lays Holy Hands :
That rite no gift of brains commands,
Though a “bestowing” function classed.

Yet naught the priests’ assurance daunts
As knowing God, lie-brazened band !
Too false to truth to take their stand
With honest bivalves, owls and ants.

Promoters of an effete lore,
They teach ; but of what worth their schools,
Save to form serviceable tools
With which to enslave the " masses " more ?

They hold no doctrine that exalts ;
Their rites are pagan mummeries :
Dark ages' puerilities—
Their dogmas and their motives false.

Were there no virtues on the earth,
Nor morals, till their scheme evolved,
From astronomic myth, and solved
The value of man's credent worth ?

LVIII.

Prospective Heaven cannot appease
Their sanctimonious worldliness,
Nor calm their cravings to possess
Earth's carnal temporalities.

They who on paltry pulpit heights
Of theologic Horebs stand,
To show the Almighty One at hand,
By their vile marsh miasmic-lights.

Religion called ! yet proves to be
(Hiding their aim) a mask for these—
The few—to live in idle ease
Upon the *duped Majority*,

And draw from the benighted Poor
A fund of this world's wealth, that seems
Greater than hoarding-miser dreams,
Which by Christ's creed they should abjure.

As much life's enemies as are
Disease and Death, their guile destroys
Life's stinted sum of earthly joys
With those of some vague heaven afar ;

Holding their natures love-subdued
By a hoax-sacrifice Divine,
And through their simple trust, design
Exploiting them through gratitude.

Malignant spawn of Church, that ilk !
Worst foes of human weal that breathe !
The pharisaic-souled who seethe
The kid in its own mother's milk.

LIX.

When will the pillaged "masses" find
The Church to be a foe to fear?
How long ere the oppressors hear
The execrations of mankind?

As in the past, so now no less,
Its secret knaveries abound,
And wrongs unparalleled, when found,
Save in the Devil's diocese.

Throughout all lands, all realms, all climes,
On concrete falsehood based and built,
Cemented by red-handed guilt :
A hideous lazar-house of crimes.

Nor should the Protestant decry
The cognate cheat, the allied trick,
A consanguineous heretic
To little of the larger lie.

To solemn affirmation true,
Numbers no Pagan rites affect :
But *one* recalcitrating sect,
Dog-like returning to its spew ;

Bestowing an apostate's name
On Rome's sworn enemy—and now,
False to its Reformation vow,
Joins hands in fellowship with shame.

Thus branded, it were vain to shrink
As one in union not o'er-fond,
Though coupled in a cognate bond
Like vowels in a diphthong link.

LX.

In Papal dominance a Ghoul !
Devitalizing men ! yet feigned
A Christ-like love of them, but reigned
With Bismarck blood-and-iron rule.

Fiend of the Octopodiæ !
With cupping tentacles outspread,
By which all forms of thrift were bled :
ARCH-ENEMY OF LIBERTY.

Resultant of an age, amiss
In barbarous deed and bestial sin :
The *man* without—the *brute* within,
Made it the curse it *was* and *is*.

The spirit's unseen universe
Throngs with the souls this Church sent there
Through paths of anguish and despair,
And blasted with its Christian curse.

Of victims manifold, that were
To literal "jaws of darkness" thrown,
To-day the oubliette-hinge's groan
Echoes their agonized demur.

Murder its ceremonial haunts
In Torture's screech of agony,
The moans of martyrs—these should be
The miserère of its chants.

Its litanies, a dismal rune
Of sobs and plaints, and harrowing prayer,
Screams and mad laughter of despair,
Blood-spattered fiend from cowl to shoon ;

Conjoined with shriek from Boot and Flame,
Heart-rending cries from Rack and Wheel,
The Virgin's grim embrace of steel,
Mercies invoked in Christ's dear name.

Blood, sacramental robes impests !
Blood taints the Palliums, Albs and Stoles !
Blood on the grimed anathemaed souls
Of those who wrought its fell-behests !

LXI.

Never to selfish means averse,
With sombre interests ever rife,
The Incubus of Higher Life,
And Degradation's foster-nurse ;

How long will it have force to flaunt
Sham potencies for souls that grieve ?
How long will cultured minds believe
Its doctrine's consecrated cant ?

Or its Religion—miscalled “true”—
That once bound feudal earth in gyves
Of proof-armed ignorance, and strives
To rivet shattered mail anew ;

Restoring mediæval times :
And retrogressive horrors come !
With fire-and-fagot martyrdom,
As holy sanctifying crimes.

Reviving days of Heretics,
To Torquemada tortures forced :
And blameless souls a holocaust,
Flaring the dark, like flaming ricks.

LXII.

Days which posterity still mourns,
When men by toxic faith were crazed,
And like to torches Hebrews blazed,
And witches crackled, too, like thorns.

Decades when knowledge lay inert,
Cadaveric : Ignorance its pall ;
When God was naught and Church was all ;
Eras of Pestilence and Dirt ;

Ages of Priestcraft's shallow tilth,
With harvests of exuberant crime,
Of public foulness, private grime :
Epochs of frailty, faith and filth.

A state which reechy monks advance
To quite a sanctifying grade :
A close conforming grime displayed
To Dirt's canonic ordinance.

LXIII.

Dare not its creed or ritual blame,
Or go anathamaed to thy death,
Make " I believe " thy shibboleth
Or, like a human fagot, flame.

Its virus-cup drank to the lees,
Its ruthless grasp of simple minds,
Reason debauched—the sight it blinds
With cowls of inane sanctities,

And law of pious-fraud controls,
Fearless of God whom it blasphemes,
As sanctifying worthless schemes
Of nostrum-rites, for curing souls.

Oh ! woeful realms bereft of joys
That Freedom brings, and Freemen prize :
Take heed ! for thus Cassandra-wise
They warn "these times" unheeding Troys.

LXIV.

In its subjection, Races die
Anæmic from degeneracies ;
Of cruel bonds and tyrannies
Ever the unscrupulous ally.

Nations with vertebrate power bent
To shore this tottering faith of Rome,
Losing dynastic force, become
Decadent empires, doomed and spent.

Clairvoyant !—why should I be dumb,
Though giving to the world, unsought,
The visions of a sight o'erwrought,
The foregleams of results to come?

Behold their destiny in this !
Faction and Feud, the paupered Purse,
Cabal, Sedition's secret curse,
Retributive as Nemesis.

Imposture yielding bitter fruits !
Corruption, Treason, Fiscal Cheats,
Riots, Rebellions, Wars, Defeats,
Acting as Parcæ substitutes.

Vile forms of tyranny abide,
Ruled by the gutter and the ditch—
Nobles, in worthless titles rich,
But beggars in all else beside.

Hordes of recanting votaries, lust
For impious act ; their Priests they nag,
Spit on their ivory Christs, and drag
The Agnus Dei in the dust.

Church pageant naught but insult meets,
In loathsome missiles Mobs delight,
Its pomp reduced to fearful plight
By ordure from the reeking streets.

And nameless horrors still to be,
When Law lies dead, and License raves,
And o'er their desolation waves
The baleful flag of Anarchy ;

While through a still-pursuing fate,
Which their retrenched puissance saps,
To debile impotency lapse
As Powers effete or inchoate,

Which to Oblivion recede,
And fossiled in the Ages' drifts
Lie hidden, 'till some Future lifts
Their Past, to heirs of saner creed.

Without, perchance—and who were loath?—
Supernal Power designs to keep
The rotting faith, a midden-heap
For Liberty's intenser growth?

A richer compost could not be
Than offal which has martyred man
Since Orthodoxy's flux began—
Sewage of Mariolatry.

LXV.

Why not to Thammuz cult resigned
And not to this, so modern crude?
An Adonèan pulchritude
A likelier "fetch" for womankind,

Though men might not be of the host
Who worship Mary! Mary's fame
Was polyandric, and became
Polygamous with man and ghost.

Her sex's mind, with *aptness* scored,
Proves vantage for the priestly guild:
A bigot-base on which to build
The superstructure of a fraud.

Well knowing this, and the effect,
The female child is put in train,
For stamping on its plastic brain,
Life-long delusions of the sect.

For she is mother of the race,
And at her knees the man-child taught
A false belief--so cunning-fraught,
Even wiser years may not efface.

Thus myriad mother, legioned priest,
Pervert the child-world's plastic mind
With fabricated facts which blind,
Maturity till life has ceased.

And thus a propaganda schemed,
For sowing holy tares broadcast :
A Devil's harvest, far more vast
Than Pope or Cardinal e'er dreamed.

LXVI.

A faith with Orthodoxy shod,
Tramples all doubt, nor leaves intact
Man's warder, Reason ; thus, in fact,
In routing that, assails his God ;

The *True God* of the inner man,
The spiritual essence, made
His guard, his guide, his helpful aid,
Throughout his being's mortal span.

Its record never can appease
The kindly heart's instinctive hate ;
Its joy in cruelty, innate,
The curse of all Hierarchies.

The kindest nature will rebel !
Mercy, with Fury-rage beset,
Making the tenderest hearts regret
That for *its* dole there *is no* hell.

Its juggling priests, its tonsured knaves,
Degrade the man to human brute,
And, armed with power absolute,
Convert their dupes to abject slaves.

LXVII.

With ignorance the septic root
Of sacerdotal rule : from whence
Issues decretal, "abstinence"
From "knowledge," and its "mystic fruit"—

Establishing a world-wide thrall,
Convinced, if mankind disobey,
Nourished by "fruit forbidden"—THEY,
Not contumacious man, *must fall*.

For Knowledge, thus enlightening man,
Would make their guerdon dearly earned,
Their vicious purpose seen and spurned,
Spoiling their Scarlet-Woman plan.

To issues of their teachings blind
Throughout their miscalled Holy See :
The embodiment of tyranny
That dwarfs the Tarquins of mankind.

But when the dens and dives and stews
 Know their abuse, with slaughter lusts
 They'll make reprisal holocausts
Cry quits with Saint Bartholomews.

They know not yet the *how* or *when*
 Till freedom points the time and path,
 And they arise in hideous wrath,
Like maw and claw from wild-beast den.

LXVIII.

'Twixt what is known and preached, a schism ;
 And mythos made to mask as Truth.
 They know God's attributes forsooth,
Whose mental state is sciolism !

The lust of sordidness their dower,
 The mammon muck-rakes of the earth ;
 The human soul of trivial worth,
To harpagons of wealth and power.

Their craft is subtle, vulpine, dark.
For knowledge there is no advance ;
But swarming hordes of ignorants
Prove quarry for the Hierarch.

Of dismal Superstitions, worst
Of all, infecting souls with dread :
Crime to the heart, Crime to the head
Denounced, condemned, proscribed, accurst.

LXIX.

Beliefs which pure ideals smirch,
Traditions which proved facts belie,
And rites of purest pagan dye,
Embodied as a Holy Church ;

All honesty in fable sunk,
And chicane gospel-script o'erlaid
With texts its iron rule to aid ;
Mere forgeries of the lying monk.

They plagiarized the classic trick
Of heroes apotheosized,
Honored with holy shrines, and prized
As Gods parthenogenetic.

Their holy truths, mere *drama*, spiced
With flavors of the mummied past,
God after God enhanced the cast,
The plot, denouèmented with Christ.

Its rites exalt not, but deprave ;
It breeds a stolid, brainless brood ;
Few of the virtues of the good,
But all the vices of the slave.

LXX.

The poor, the humble sons of toil,
The lowly-born, its prop and stay ;
A cowed and tonsured caste betray,
And hold in durance as their spoil.

Its power, the active cause and chief
Of all their ills of want and crime ;
Besetting Ignorance in time
Coherent with pervert belief.

Dogma-obsessed hordes that feast
On gospel-garbage live and die,
The victims of an impious lie,
Dupes of a Church, its creed and priest ;

Their hate of slavery subdued
By their God-vicars self-ordained,
Their mental badge of slave retained
And fostered by rank hebetude.

More barbarous than Turanian Huns,
Though dwelling in instructive light,
They still remain, in its despite,
As brainless as chloritic nuns.

Disciples these in priest-controls,
Whom cloistral idleness relieves
From worldly lure ; yet who believes
Their bodies convents of pure souls ?

LXXI.

Born, bred and reared in ignorance,
Struggle for higher-life suppressed ;
Delights of knowledge scorned, unguessed,
At war with culture—à *l'outrance* ;

In fable from their cradles steeped,
And forgeries of ages past,
Foes of all useful doctrine classed
With proven fact, by Science reaped ;

Their search for Truth of no avail !
She dwells not in the wells defiled
By Superstition ; still beguiled,
Though knowledge holds the Holy Grail.

Their burdens all life's worth enthrall !
To their real source of suffering, blind ;
Ever pursuing hope, to find
A heart-ache at the core of all.

For such must life with grief abound ?
 Seeking its gold and gath'ring dross,
 Bearing in poverty their cross,
With thorns their toil-worn foreheads crowned ?

Reason debauched and long adust,
 The burthen of their faith abides,
 And their most worshipped, guards and guides,
Fooling their simple, patient trust.

Thus ever doomed to haunt the prison,
 The sepulchre of buried Truth,
 With fruitless search and useless ruth :
The tomb is there ! *but Truth has risen.*

LXXII.

Reared in the blasphemies of Faith,
 'Gainst reasoning sense a war is waged,
 Their earthly misery assuaged
By that true Mercy men call Death.

Earth has lost all delight and lure,
Misfortune's flood they fail to stem,
The world is weariness to them,
"Life is disease and Death the cure."

To pain no mitigating pause,
Nor to their weariness repose,
Until upon their misery close
The tomb's inexorable doors.

To their well-being most unwise,
Soddened in reek of ignorance ;
Their hells endured, as in advance
Of heirship of a Paradise.

Weak bondsmen to the lying lip !
Bæotians, duped by spurious fears !
To them this "Righteousness" appears—
Poor helots of prelatic whip !

Their fetters neither gall nor wound ;
Proud of the shackles that they wear,
Are they less slaves because they bear
Their vassal chains by Faith festooned ?

Truth's attar'd incense they love not !
But, like the perfume-loathing cur,
Slink from it with a dread demur,
But yet will reek with carrion-rot.

They see a falsehood richly shrined,
Nor doubt it truth, and do not dare
To lift the Isis veil, and stare
Wild-eyed at fraud that lies behind.

Will trust like theirs ne'er be outworn ?
Their fatal folly never cease ?
Leaving, like silly sheep, their fleece
Ever on Cunning's hedge and thorn ?

LXXIII.

Are these not sons of God likewise ?
Is Christ the only one who died
Disprized, belied and crucified,
Towards Heaven lifting anguished eyes ?

The only one, in agony,
Whose trembling lips in protest groaned,
And upward lifted head, who moaned,
“My God, hast Thou forsaken me?”

The only ones, thorn-crowned-deviced,
Nail-pierced by ingrates, lies and loss,
Unsolaced on their secret cross,
Who bear the stigmata of Christ?

Or was He but the type of all,
In life's probation, who have found
Spear-thrusts, in crucifixions bound,
And drank its hyssop and its gall?

True liegemen! whom no wrongs provoke,
By spiritual sway enthralled,
And by tyrannic-temporal galled:
Thus burthened with a double yoke;

In sacerdotal bondage crushed,
Their sense of vital wrong unstirred,
The voice of their despair unheard,
In death's eternal coma hushed.

There is no chance for Freedom's aid,
For minds made leprous by foul creeds ;
There is no refuge for their needs,
Save from the mattock and the spade.

LXXIV.

Most human institutions rest
On Force ; therefore by force alone
Can they be wrecked and overthrown,
And "*Bad*" supplanted by the "*Best*."

Not till awakened man despairs
Of Fabian methods, and essays
Righting the vicious wrong, and brays
The priesthood at the altar-stairs ;

Or, roused to a consuming ire,
Dooms to a shapeless ruin all
Tokens of their pernicious thrall,
With cyclone razzias of fire ;

And where its trickster shrines have been
And flourished in malefic might,
No stone on stone to mark the sight,
Naught but chaotic ruin seen ;

While Faith, Rite, Creed and Dogma fall,
Swept to some Hinnom's vague abysm,
With all their pious Ku-Kluxism,
Like sweepings of a Kaffir-kraal—

Careless of what such deeds forebode !
Though crucial wars leave lands forlorn,
Often, through sorrow, good is born,
And true reforms achieved in blood.

Better the Nation win the name
Agnostic rather than of Sect
Of tainted creed, with fraud-defect,
And doomed to be the era's shame.

Destined to fall in cognate line
With like delusions of the race,
And totter from its worthless base,
Like by-gone Faiths once held Divine.

Though Christ were truly nailed to cross,
Redeeming man from literal hell
(Arrant untruth), yet 'twere not well
The fable lack suggestive force.

A legend of the Sanskrit brand,
Known to the earlier world to be
A myth of Heliolatry,
Before it cursed this Western land

As Christian faith, the scourge and bane
Of civil Liberty, and binds
The weazen hearts and shallow minds
Of brainless bigots in its train.

If crucifixion once sufficed,
In fable, to redeem mankind,
A freedom-loving race might find
Its guerdon in enacting Christ.

* * * * *

Once from the cross, and seeming dead,
Scorning sepulchral bonds to rise
Immortal from the sacrifice,
With glory's nimbus garlanded,

LXXV.

The mills of God may slowly grind,
But yet they grind austere fine,
For those who check a gift divine,
Dwarfing the Reason of mankind.

For that is His most precious gift
To man, whereby he kills or quells
Misdoing brute that in him dwells,
Scornful of aid from priestly shrift.

Atonement must be made for sin !
Punition not as man-devised,
A torment not exteriorized !
OUR HEAVENS AND HELLS ARE BORNE WITHIN.

They need not dread a God austere,
Nor tremble at THE GREAT ASSIZE !
That's scheduled with more potent lies :
They'll have their soul's remorse to fear.

LXXVI.

Beyond what carnate sense conceives,
Modes of sensation may prevail—
In that new state beyond the veil,
Where mind its discipline achieves,

There the discarnate soul may find
Content supreme, or pain for sin,
Cognate with evil held within ;
Its bliss or torment—states of mind.

And in progression feel the spell
Of good abjured and evil wrought ;
The life-renewed, with anguish fraught :
Its Immortality, its Hell !

Death ends not sorrow nor distress,
Nor passions that delight, yet cloy.
Nor will it in the grave enjoy
Nirwana's peace of nothingness ;

No sackcloth-shrift beyond the grave!
No hell for sin's purgation there!
But sorrow counterfeits despair,
"For from ourselves no Christ can save."

LXXVII.

Strange! that on Freedom's soil should be
A wrong so gross, and not create
A protest fierce, articulate,
Against this alien tyranny.

For Freedom's Minster should be purged,
Its evil-workers exorcised,
As from the Zion temple Christ
The sordid money-changers scourged.

All teaching is a scheme o'erwrought!
What strength of nutriment in Schools
Diluted by the flood of fools,
As affluent to knowledge taught?

Its rule, the metaphoric pen,
Where wallow in their foul mischance
The herds transformed by *Ignorance*,
THE CIRCE OF THE SOULS OF MEN.

LXXVIII.

Its influence in government
Is felt in evil ; chiefly here.
Freemen have its control to fear :
A mental-helotry its bent.

Its secret agencies forestall
All wholesome forms of civic rules ;
In City Councils, Public Schools,
And every Board Municipal.

Through Club and College permeates
Its subtle tampering, unrelaxed
In all the fundamental acts,
Forming the functionings of States.

Congress, Convention, Bar and Bench,
All courts Judicial, witness-box,
Grand Juries and the prisoner-docks—
On these its crafty-workings trench.

By germs of Jesuit-virus strewn,
Through all decretal syndicates—
Few of this Wardenry of States
Against the toxic taint immune !

Army and Navy, every branch
Embodies a confederate band ;
Imperilling that loyal stand,
No discipline can render staunch

In times of Peril to the frame
Of constitutional government :
A Church's empire imminent,
To the Republic's fame and name.

LXXIX.

Conditions which await result
Expected, if not preordained !
This New-World-Power possessed, maintained
A stronghold of the Papal Cult !

God's Vicar Vaticaned in Rome,
Veridic Press-reports declare,
Intends (for failing crops elsewhere)
To make this land " His Harvest Home " !

So sweetly tolerant we appear
Of the designing priestly league,
So listless of this Church-intrigue
To root its Ritualism here,

Such parasites to Papal force !
So blind to its most plain intent !
Till brought (its victim) to lament
Imperilled Freedom—or its loss—

To be restored by civil war,
And all its soul-revolting scenes ;
With supplemental grewsome means,
That lack the warranty of law.

The Public voice bestows no stress
In its rebuke of these Church-pacts,
Perchance discredits them as facts ;
Or has the Pope dragooned the Press ?

LXXX.

Its fiat fetters noblest minds,
Palsies the weak to impotence,
Blunts the keen edge of common-sense,
With those whom fallacy still binds.

While from the mold of crumbling creeds,
A fungoid growth of dogma springs ;
Such noxious and unwholesome things
As cryptal gloom of error breeds.


The birthright of the Poor its prey,
The crucifix becomes a pledge
Of their enslavement, fatal badge !
Human dumb-beasts of burden they !

Discipled criminals in time,
Infesting gutters, glutting slums,
Such are their choice elysiums,
Fetid with moral sludge and slime.

For ignorance makes crooked the soul,
Misshape concordant moulds the mind ;
In one distortion both combined,
Thus apt for criminal control.

And there as foul diseases bide,
And like to beasts of prey from thence,
Issue at times a Pestilence :
Bubonic plague personified.

When Mob-law civic rule assails,
Riot from thence its garbage spews ;
The slough and wallow of the stews,
And excrete of cloacal jails.



In haunts of vice they dwell at ease,
But swarm from their mephitic pens,
From Degradation's hideous dens,
As Democratic potencies.

Thus from this source results are due
In monstrous tyrannies of ill :
The sovereign and despotic will
Of gutter, brothel, jail and stew.

Crass ignorance and roguery stand
As bulwark to the cleansing bent
Of every favored movement, meant
For foulness, lustrumed from the land.

LXXXI.

Banality of Franchise ! when
In ballot-power *true manhood's* made
Coequal with this felon-grade,
The *brutehood* of the Dive and Den.

Briarean Mob ! of arms no lack,
But brains proportioned to its mood,
In ratio of amount for good,
As Falstaff's bread to Falstaff's sack.

Will statesmen long condone th' abuse
Of Faction's glozing efforts, made
To use these colleagues, and to raid
The public purse for private use ?

Results denounced, condemned, deplored,
The age beholding them, aghast
At crime illimitably vast :
All office honey-combed with fraud.

A curse to county, town, and state :
Ballot debauched, the franchise scorned,
By rabble from the slums suborned,
Debasing the electorate.

Hence "sham majority" achieves
A priestly project : an intent
To yield a City's government
As spoil to felons, roughs and thieves.

Thus hoarded funds of Peter's Pence
In amplitude expand, and serve
As sinews of religious verve,
In cultivating Ignorance.

Fair field of sacerdotal toil !
A baneful swamp, ploughed, drained and
ditched,
And by a midden-cult enriched,
Of Crime, becomes a fecund soil.

LXXXII.

Let mourning edge all civic rolls,
For honest-rule is dead and cold,
Corruption henceforth will uphold
The lying verdict of the Polls.

For through the cities' dens and dives,
And by their scoundrel-populace,
This buckramed danger and disgrace,
This odium of the nation, thrives.

'Twixt Church design and this, no schism !
In flexile bonds its conscience writhes :
'Tis pleasant penance, taking tithes
From Jubilees of scoundrelism.

Religion-named ! yet it includes
Methods political, to school
Its priestly agencies, to rule
Triumphant blockhead-multitudes.

Hence Office with the knave is rife,
And pensioned from the cities' wealth,
Past-masters in the schemes of stealth :
The official curse of civic life.

Trusting and credent unto death,
Fanatic in devotion, none
Can formulate what may be done,
Through impulse of perfervid faith.

Their secret ways defying search,
Officials made of slum-born rogues,
Whose flood of spoil no doubt embogues
The coffers of the Holy Church.

True to the law of Pedigree,
Of brutish stock the brute is born :
The Church, cold-blooded, voids its spawn,
These, its reptilian progeny.

They govern th' exploited town,
Who should in jails find penal work,
Yet in whose venal shadow lurk
The cassock and the tonsured crown.

To no corrupting means averse,
Virtue they slur, not vice decry ;
Their propaganda financed by
The lootage of the Public Purse.

LXXXIII.

Amid the wrongs which earth have cursed,
Degrading God, enslaving man,
Since Creed was schemed and Fraud began,
This Holy Church is wholly worst.

Thearchic insolence, the base
On which is reared the chartered crime,
Despotic since its earliest prime,
The bold debaucher of the race.

Its Christianity has stood
As if with human misery charmed,
And, with its cruel tenets armed,
Proclaimed the *wickedness* of *Good* ;

And shed more blood, wrought more distress,
Than all its cognate pagan creeds
Combined, and sown its thorny seeds,
Brambling the earth with wretchedness.

There's not within the planet's pale
Barbaric spot or culture-graced
On which a Church has not been placed
Or where its cult does not avail.

Each point a strategist might deem
Expedient in a war-campaign
To hold intact and to retain
For a choice subjugating scheme.

To found in perpetuity,
The synonym of human ill,
This Church a clerical Bastille
Of manacled humanity.

Has Heaven a God supreme and wise
Who fails the wrongs of men to curb ?
No horrors of His earth disturb
The calm of His un pitying skies.

Once blasphemy its climax gained
When for a thousand years, aye, more,
This Church presumed to God ignore,
Usurped His throne and ruled and reigned ;

Fouled earth with hieratic lust,
Where crime and cruelty abode,
Making the life that God bestowed
Of lesser value than the dust ;

By massacres purveying death,
Goodness impeached by rampant Crime,
With reason strangled in the slime
And sputa of a viscid Faith ;

Engendered Hate and stifled Mirth,
Ranked Cruelties as special arts,
Choked tearful Pity, hardened hearts,
And banished Mercy from the earth ;

Encouraged Ignorance and spurned
Skilled Knowledge from its hostile path,
Sworn foe of Progress, venting wrath
On all that bore the stamp of learned ;

Embittered friends, Affections killed,
Poisoned the Truth, at Virtue sneered,
Oppressed the Poor, at Misery jeered,
And homes with hate dissension filled ;

For ages made its realms a morgue
With Rack and Stake and Borgia's art,
And every sin on its foul heart
Named in Jehovah's Decalogue.

'Tis no religion, but a scheme—
A hybrid cross 'twixt Creed and Greed,
A mongrel plan designed to lead,
In this fool-world, to rule supreme.

If e'er its ignorants should swell
To larger legions of its cult,
Then Church Domdaniel the result,
And this Fool's Paradise, a Hell.

The legend of the Argonauts
Finds its revival in this age :
These holy Corsairs cruise and rage
For plunder in all earthly ports.

An Argoan quest that does not cease,
A papal Jason guides the search,
All lands a Colchis for their Church,
Shearing from fools the Golden Fleece.

LXXXIV.

A true unfictioned Upas-tree !
Fecund as Banyan, every branch
Sends down contributories staunch,
Shadowing human Liberty.

Shall it, in ever-spreading girth,
 Extend its darkness-loving might,
 And in the Optimist's despite,
Crowd Freedom from benighted earth?

A guild which first its dupes depraves
 Through fear and ignorance, then rules
 To make of them the bigot fools,
The easier to convert to slaves ;

The truths of Science, scorned, denied ;
 Progress restrained with bigot grip ;
 The eyes put out of Scholarship,
Faith blessed, and knowledge crucified.

Now with decrepit age infirm,
 Yet Cunning holds the chair of force :
 'Twixt Pride and Power no sure divorce,
Till Pious Fraud has reached its term.

Yet with its Machiavelian trait,
 To fellowship with reasoning mind,
 To wholesome freedom of mankind,
A foe no less inveterate.

When triple-crowned, enthroned it sat,
Its cruel craft a thing to dread,
But now the Lion's lordly tread
Gives place to crawl of mousing cat ;

Yet would with royal prestige shine,
The simple, with mock sceptre, fool,
Imposture as the means to rule,
Falsehood and Fraud its Right Divine.

With Crozier, Cross and Pastoral Staff,
Mitre, Biretta, Triple-Crown,
Pallium, Soutane, Stole and Gown,
No King's regalia counts the half ;

High on the Hierarchal perch,
Papa becomes a Pontifex ;
And red-robed Cardinals annex
Titles as Princes of The Church ;

Red, their escutcheon-color made
In memory of those days of yore
When Church was lewdly Poped, and wore
The scarlet garb of Babylon's Jade ;

In fact, with sumptuous tailoring,
With Rosary, Cross and Crucifix,
With Agnus Dei, Pax and Pyx,
Out-gewgaws any Laic King.

LXXXV.

But why its sombre pomp rehearse?
Processioned priests and Acolytes,
Holy-buffoonery's delights,
Past-masters of exuberant Farce ;

Such gauds the TEACHER'S spirit mocks
By earth-life of the pauper grade
The Holy Mendicant has made
The WEALTHY priest—a paradox.

The Poor, the Meek, the Lowly Ones—
Was not the Christ of these? did not
His earth-life parallel their lot,
The simplest, tenderest of God's sons?

From Him in sequence, can it be
 There's no hiatus in the line
 Apostolic, from the Christ benign,
No breach of continuity?

Is this the grain of that meek seed
 That He once sowed, or that it bears,
 Yield of the Devil's worldly tares,
Strewn for Ambition, Pride and Greed?

LXXXVI.

To impotence its forces trend ;
 Wrenched from its grasp its temporal might ;
 While on its record rests the blight
Of execrations without end.

What is man's boasted reason worth,
 That such a priestly-impious plot
 Could so have dazed it, and have not
With scornful laughter filled the earth?

When will the wiser world be ripe
To flout its God-degrading plan?
Never, till in th' evolving man,
The *brute* becomes a worn-out type ;

Or Time its monstrous greed betrays,
And Laity scorns Hierophants,
Or Knowledge, Ignorance supplants
In mankind's every ethnic phase ;

Bearing the burden of its crime
As the decree of hidden Fate :
To rage in vain, but longer wait
The slothful force of halting time.

LXXXVII.

What factor must be deemed the chief
In Man's accepting its pretence
Except the fool in permanence
The dupe outcropping in Belief ?

When will Oblivion's curtain drop
 Upon this drama-act of Fraud,
 And knaves and witlings cease to laud
The Actors with the Claquer's sop?

Will mankind never scale its worth,
 Bowed in assent to its demands,
 Withhold recoil till Doomsday stands
Upon the threshold of the earth?

Or will triumphant Freedom bring
 Rendition of this vital theme?
 Her footfalls to the rescue seem
Slower than leaden-footed Spring.

Protest and wrath were vainly spent,
 Hatred, derision, scoff, disdain ;
 All processes save Force seem vain,
Slow as stalagmite increment.

Were Time but to an hour compressed,
 Or to an instant of his flight,
 That I, like Islam's Sultan, might
Of magic vision be possessed,

To see the doom that now it braves,
When angered Earth in wrath will bring
Confusion to the Unholy Thing,
And joy to manumitted slaves !

LXXXVIII.

When Man, attaining perfect birth,
A miracle of Wisdom, stands
In wiser world and happier lands,
“ Think ye he'll find this faith on Earth ? ”

It cannot be his curse for aye.
Be patient still ! can we expect
That “ darkest Afric ” should be trekked
Within the cycle of a day ?

When fools from folly are estranged,
When Egoism forgets *itself*,
When misers give the Poor their pelf,
The Cynic to th' Altruist changed,

No Priesthood with the present linked,
No monkish drivell, called "God's word,"
But like the inept Dodo-bird,
The Christian Pietist—extinct—

Relicked in old ancestral schists,
'Mid fossilized religious thought—
Of these (then ages past), and sought
By Lore-Palæontologists.

LXXXIX.

Th' Ideal era reached, man may
Of God evolve sublimer view,
An ikon, space-wide from the True,
Yet not the lampoon of to-day.

Instinctively averse to tax
His Fancy in Belief's behalf,
And give of God, a photograph
With priestly blab for holy facts.

Heirs of the ages will revolt,
Nor prove the victims of a scheme
Strong in effrontery : a theme
For Balaamites to dupe the Dolt.

XC.

Nature is slothfully sublime
In all progressive acts which make
Each process towards attainment take
The phase of Everlasting Time.

As Nebulæ, in rotary stress
Whirling, condense a lucent core
To a sun-system, adding more
To the weird sum of countlessness ;

Till solar energy first tossed
Its giant outpost-planets far,
Each seeming but a wand'ring star
Seeking its system, strayed or lost,

Till orbital-career begun,
Through laws that rule etheric space,
Wheeling in satellitious place
About the central magnet Sun—

The mind-bewildering events
In time, since smelted Earth was hurl'd
In void, an incandescent world :
Plutonic bubbling continents ;

Ere yet the vaped globe condensed
Diluvial rains, and mountain sheds
Poured floods, which trenched their river-beds
Through channels, obdurately fenced,

And time incalculable clears
Paths for their onrush-way to go,
And unperturbed at last, to flow,
Like a good life in vale of years ;

And the crude world's depression fills
With countless affluents like these ;
Forming the crisp-foamed shining seas,
Submerging fossil-salted hills

And velds ; ere Ichthyosauri swum
The tepid waters, vapor-hazed ;
Or Dinosaurian Mammal grazed
Or browsed with Megatherium ;

Ere seismic force from oozy base
Thrust up the soaring mountain top
To altitudes which seem to prop
The stars, and shoulder concave space ;

Keeping in lonesomeness of sea,
With Solitude, eternal tryst ;
Ere verdured deltas oasised
Its impotent sterility,

Or sea-holms, in their tropic trim,
Basked in a sylvan flora yield,
While the grand Ocean-Organ pealed
Anthem in storm, in calm its hymn ;

The dateless time when life began,
Or when the vegetative earth,
After the reptile-shapes, gave birth
To higher forms of brute—the Man !

Æons since coral zoöphyte
Built through the Ocean's briny miles
Lagooned Atolls and palmy isles,
Destined for Cannibal delight ;

Till reef, shoal-ambushed, stabs and hews
Pirogues and Barks to foundering,
And seas in riot, wreckage fling
Isle-ward, the Golgothas of Crews—

So Holy Truth is never spent,
Nor in constructive process halts ;
In self-assertion foiling False,
She too of Time is exigent.

XCI.

Æons must pass ere man will find
His true creation formed complete ;
His pious fallacies, effete,
Limboed in strata of the mind.

His Gods, Cult, Creed, Salvation Plan,
In Culture's drifts found stratified,
As with the Cave-Bear bones abide
Tokens of rudimental man.

Triumph of Evolution ! when,
Compared with later genesis,
The masterpiece that man *now* is,
Mere foetus to the man of THEN.

As slowly degradations mark
The natural process of decay,
So no hysteric force will sway
The passing of the Hierarch,

Sinking to legendary gloom,
As all man's concepts—*thought* to be
Solutions of his destiny ;
Life's solved Enigma—and its doom.

XCII.

Thus Evolution will express
For this "Unparagoned," the need
That heart and intellect be freed
From tyrannies of foolishness.

Religion is not Ethics, nor
Is Dogma discipline designed
For healthy betterment of mind,
Nor revamped fable, Holy Law !

Though privileged and sordid crime
Betray not when their end's to be,
Seeming as if Eternity
Had been monopolized by Time,

God holdeth all things in survey
That mock our human sense of Right,
And to our Dark vouchsafes no Light :
"HIS WILL BE DONE," IT IS HIS WAY.

XCIII.

When loftier human impulse drives
The spirit of a flagrant breed
To emulate the nobler deed,
Which, yielding scope to Reason, thrives

By scholarship enriched—at odds
With all Religion fable-trussed,
And Christian Deities, adust,
Oblivioned with the Vedic Gods—

Science no longer held as foe
To Faith, but mighty to avert
From patient Truth the deadly hurt
That will from shrewd ecclesiarchs flow ;

Behold unveiling radiance play
Around the mysteries hidden long,
While earth, rejoicing, hails with song
The dawning of the promised day.

XCIV.

Then onward—for all coming time,
To march as an enfranchised host,
Retrieving epochs grimed and lost
In sloughs of sacerdotal slime.

Avenging generations, thrust
To outer-darkness, where abort
Horrors unmatched, and ages wrought
To forms of rapine, crime and lust,

Through an ecclesiastic thrall,
To buttress ignorance designed,
Despoil the masses, curse mankind,
And push great nations to their fall :

The race no longer foul in plight,
Blund'ring through creedal-bogs, in quest
Of righteous paths, the priests suggest,
Misled by "ignis-fatuus" light ;

And Reason's rays nor dimmed nor quenched
In the mephitic fogs of Faith,
With God no more a goblin-wraith,
But in all hearts as Love intrenched ;

And credent man not prone to lapse
To planes of pessimist distrust,
For Spirit will transcend his dust,
With Heaven no more a "GREAT PERHAPS."

XCV.

Then will the soul achieve desire
Concordant with the height it seeks,
Of which each true Apostle speaks
With Pentecostal tongue of fire.

Then will Hope's fond Utopias seem
No phantom fallacies of sight,
But facts of palpable delight,
And Life no vain Alnaschar-dream.

For ignorance will ebb, and mark,
On shore-lines of recessions past,
Where all its faiths, in ruins vast,
Gods, Cults and Creeds, lie dead and stark.

The new-born century ablaze
With knowledge, Superstitions show
That leprous-pale, corpse-candle glow,
Seen through a swamp's miasmic haze.

XCVI.

Prophets of God, were your lips sealed,
Victims of Kabalistic spell
That baffled speech, and could not tell
The wondrous truths which He revealed?

What *is* it that our Faith demands
In biblic babblings of your race?
Of Godlike token no more trace
Than footsteps in the simoomed-sands.

The paths that Argosies have trod
O'er liquid cragginess of seas,
Reveal as much of track, as these
The trace of a Revealing God.

Beshrew the gospel's vile pretence,
For logic makes conviction sure :
All God-inspired literature
Records of Priestcraft insolence.

Of Heavenly Father not a scheme,
This fiction of Salvation-Plan,
Devised to stultify the man,
The world astound, and God blaspheme,

But master-stroke of that shrewd guild,
With which to make mankind its slave,
From cradled childhood to the grave ;
In lies of its invention drilled.

XCVII.

Deluded man has been misled
To his dishonor, shame and ruth,
By yielding faith to bold untruth :
A Mythos misinterpreted.

Man has not fallen ! but progressed
Through vast sequential-cells of life ;
Through æons of zoetic strife,
Till as a Christ He stood confessed.

The Gnostic-*Man !* of peerless breed !
So god-like in his human grade,
That noblest manhood has been made ;
From *such* a model, lapsed indeed.

But not through Adam's mythic fall,
But his divinest tenure killed
By this Hierophantic guild,
And its debasing bastard-thrall.

XCVIII.

Christ, as a *grand-ideal*, *then*
Might claim allegiency, but *now*
Should we to limitations bow
Of half-developed times and men?

With vile patristic forgeries scored,
All chronicles of Him appear,
And legends of His earth-career
Impugned by a puissant fraud.

Yet souls evolving on the plan
Of purest Spiritism's facts,
Will index what the mythos lacks
In symbolizing ideal man.

As fuller glows the glorious morn
Of a New Faith, old Creeds are spurned
In obloquy, and on them turned
Flash-lights of intellectual scorn.

XCIX.

Religions by assumptions braced
Give no finality to creeds,
But "*proven facts*" are what man needs—
Faith on "*absolute knowledge based.*"

The enigma of our being, we
Had not the faculties to solve ;
Now, *Death, we know*, does not involve
The Spirit's immortality.

Such truth *The New Religion* gives ;
There is no Death ! the immortal soul
From carnate bonds escapes control,
And in *eternal progress* lives ;

A Pharos on that mystic sea,
O'er which Imagination sailed,
Yet ne'er till now one light availed,
Beaconing Life's continuity.

C.

Though headstones, blotched with weathered rust
As weary, holding up, unread,
The records of th' oblivioned dead,
Leaning o'er uncohering dust,

Seem with a solemn lesson fraught,
Which to the sorrowing spirit saith :
Behold the omnipotence of Death !
Which bringeth all things unto naught,

The husk of the soul's house, at best,
To swift decay predestinate,
Its Tenant's—a chimera's fate ;
Its immortality—a jest ;

Though aching heart, too pained with grief,
To war with Doubt, which faith assails,
Throb with an anguish that prevails
In pathos of a lost belief ;

Naught, from that form to coffin-clod,
Can perish utterly, which shares
Cosmic existence, and thus bears
The impress of the Living God.

There's nothing of which Science treats
That knows annihilation—none
From Energy and Motion won
That back to nothingness escheats.

CI.

Let marvellous types all doubt disperse !
Behold one fact sublimely taught :
The elemental atoms wrought
To a Majestic Universe !

Think not that those involved with thee
Are lost ; taking thy form again,
Etherealized, they still remain
Thy Spirits everlastingly.

And though in testing Life's brief time
The carnal must in earth attend
Corruption's waste, at last to end
Bone-phosphate and a little lime,

Yet, if the tree, the bulb, the flower,
Earth-planted, thence draw bloom and scent,
Such fruit and leafy wonderment,
Think'st thou the grave owns no like dower,

New life potentially to bring
From whence such undreamed forces lurk,
And Evolution's functions work
For every God-established thing?

Let human hearts with hope be rife,
For from the dead—why not from them?—
Come mystic growth, miraculous stem
And radix of Immortal Life?

CII.

Regardless of the gravestone moss,
Thy kindred whisper from the spot—
That bond, though seeming loosed, is not
The kinship of eternal loss—

Mere earthy sensuousness, the sum
Of all such gross vitalities.
What proves *its* dissolution, frees
Force-germinal of Life-to-Come.

The Alter-ego lieth there
By that remove, from carnal woes
Absolved ; the Primal Spirit rose
To Endless Life—the Grave's despair !

Its mouldering cheeks no tears have pearled,
No pang in heart, no grief, no sigh.
Its patient dust unchallenged by
The clamor of the work-day world.

CIII.

Factitious death the Truth belied !
Consigned to ashy lifelessness
The carnal was—yet ne'ertheless—
There is no death ! WE NEVER DIED !

Our vital spirits ever near
To thy gross earthinesses bring
A solace for thy suffering,
But, poor grieved heart ! thou canst not hear.

That change transitional bestows
Radiant-mattered life, which draws
Godward, through Evolution's laws,
And in the Spiritual glows.

In rays of saintly nimbus dight,
Death can no more its life betide,
Immaculate and glorified
In its own palpitating light.

CIV.

Blissful belief ! by *fact* assured !
Impugning happy eyes with tears !
Not Fraud, whose near two thousand years
Of evil reign has been endured.

Persuasions which the Truth portend
In splendors of unearthly tints,
As earth-verge golden sunset hints
Another day for this day's end.

Belated Truth ! yet welcome light !
That cheers life's penitential way,
Coròna of its darkest day !
Aurora of its sombrous night !

Mindful of stinted love we gave
The Mother, Brother, Sister, Wife,
When these were vital with this life,
And careless of the certain grave.

When on that sombre ebbing tide
That flows 'twixt Is and IS TO BE,
And fading vision fails to see
Through mists that fold "The Other Side"—

Then to the unveiled sight is given
The loved and lost! What bliss intense,
O'erwhelms the franchised Spirit's sense!
THE FIRST PROGRESSIVE STEP IN HEAVEN!

Religion, lacking fact like this—
A Bridge with *one* abutment-end,
The *Other*, that which doth impend
Above an imminent abyss,

As in a Phrase not well made out—
An endless-life confirmed by this,
That Death's a mere parenthesis
Clearing the predicate of Doubt.

CV.

Give trust in God a wider scope !
For life ends not in ended breath,
Grasp that great Truth—and make not death
The grim finality of Hope.

Nor be to His compassion blind :
Our days with charmed delusions fed,
Through Hope's fair Plaisance ever led,
And Death pathetically kind.

If worn with sorrow tearless-deep,
The wretched hold it not in dread,
No more than doth the pillowed head,
Nightly rehearsing it, in sleep.

Counting the miseries that mar
Some lives with grief and pain oppressed,
How grateful seems its dreamless rest !
What anguish were Insomnia !

Oh sad, sad Earth ! can Science trace
One, 'mid the shining worlds above,
That seems less worthy of God's love
Throughout His Seignory of Space !

Where still mendacious libel lives
To poison all the wells of Truth,
Embittering lives of age and youth :
Yet trained in Crime the Borgia thrives.

CVI.

There is no "word of God," save facts
Inscribed in Nature's marvellous tomes ;
Through these all "Revelation" comes,
And Science, as exponent, acts.

Through these God speaks ; no priest intrudes
In cringings bent ; no homage feigned ;
No aid in having facts explained ;
No cassock twaddling platitudes.

Behold "God's Word : " Great Primer Type !
Proclaims inexorable fact !
Not theorems which Priests extract,
As Sodom-fruit, from growths unripe.

HE cares for Bibles not a whit,
Nor Shasters, Vedas, Alcorans,
Nor any Testament of man's ;
His Nature's truths are " Holy Writ."

There read divinest Verity !
There Truth the Living God reveals ;
His Power proves, confirms and seals
His cognizance of Sovereignty.

CVII.

Only through Science can mankind
Towards knowledge of the God advance ;
And not by theoretic chance
The esoteric mystery find.

On its serene, unvaped heights,
Though no Mosaic thunder roars,
God welcomes wistful man, and Laws
That are Eternal Truths, indites.

Not from "thick darkness, fire, nor cloud"
Communeth God with tribes of men,
Nor writes on stone with finger-pen,
Nor with a "mighty voice" speaks loud ;

But, in the gentlest whisperings, low
Utters to Reason and the Soul
Wisdom not found 'neath cowl and stole
Nor typed in Gospel folio.

With no Apocrypha in sooth !
And we can lap our souls in ease
In touch with Eternal Verities,
The sacro-sanctities of truth,

Throughout His Universe bestowed,
In idiom terse : their meaning lies
Clear to the searching soul and wise
God's Imprimatur of the Code.

CVIII.

True priests and prophets there are found,
Who palter not with *fact*, to please
Bigots nor Sects nor Holy Sees,
But reverently "God's Word" expound.

With Books of Truth the world He fills,
Star-typed in volumes of the Sky !
On laminated rocks that lie
Script on the everlasting hills,

In wondrous parl of Sun and Earth,
Moving in stately progress, through
The glittering empire of the blue,
Zoned in a constellated girth.

The panoramic westward trend—
That congregated Suns rehearse,
With Universe on Universe ;
Remote Creations without end.

Worlds in measureless depths of space
Moving to music Spirits hear,
And God-ordained for every sphere,
For countless systems, room and place ;

Beheld through no sect-dungeon-bars
The awed and impressed mortal reads
God's manual, as the planet speeds
Through Night's vast solitude of stars—

All garrulous of Him ; and so
By no fraud-revelation ruled,
Be not by Sects so grossly fooled,
AND LET THE FETISH BIBLE GO.

CIX.

From tablets of the mind 'twere best
To have ITS tutelage erased,
And hold cerebral context, graced
AS TRUTH'S GOD-WRITTEN PALIMPSEST.

There's more of God in weed and briar,
More of His voice in whispering leaves,
More of His love in Autumn sheaves,
Than in its fabled text entire.

There's more of God in kindly balm
Of loving ministry to grief,
Than found in searching every leaf
Forming the covin Gospel sham.

Sun-lighted leas, or storm-torn crags,
Anthem of Ocean, song of Brook,
Speak more of Him than monkish book,
Inked o'er with lies on pulp of rags.

Or scenic splendors of the night,
With stars and galaxy aglow,
The sibilant hush of Earth below
Awed in the palpitating light ;

The Forest Fane, its dim defiles,
Groined gothic-like with arching boughs,
The aromatic dusk and drowse
Pervading all its minster-aisles ;

Temple of mystic God more meet ;
O'er altars leafy baldachin
It's mellowed sunlight, holier than
The chandler's tallow counterfeit,

Glooming a famed basilica,
Where gaudy superflux of show
Insults the Want and kneeling Woe,
And God far-off—so very far !

Yet man can not conceive as fact
That all that's *seen or is to see*
An "*always has been, and to be*"
Apart from a creative act.

And not the hexaemeron fad,
Which makes ONE day in every seven
A quack-proprietary Heaven
For every sanctimonious Cad.

CX.

Abyssmal mysteries are these !
The onward and the backward way
Of endless progress—"every day
Conflux of two Eternities."

Far better 'twere that we should praise
And honor antique faith forlorn,
The sanscrit-pagan creeds outworn,
The gospels of long-vanished days—

Vyasa Legend, Hindoo Ved,
Bhagavad-Geeta-Song—with these
The Zenda-Vesta of Parsees,
Th' inspired script of gods long dead ;

Or to Gotama Buddha pray
Who in the Holy Bo-Tree's shade
Seeking Nirvana, sat and said
Om! Om! Om! Om! the live-long day—

Than make a fetish of the tome
 Belittling God, and glozing men,
 Compiled by none knows who, or when,
Save Gnostics and the Sham of Rome ;

Beguiling-priest's insensate trash !
 Culled from Akkadian myth, and made
 As " Holy Writ " to masquerade,
Serving as orthodoxal hash,

Wherewith to nourish fools ! and thence
 Drawing the means of sumptuous style
 From witless dupes, whom they beguile,
Degenerates, dwarfed to impotence,

Lead lotus-eating lives, sufficed
 With all contentments earth can give,
 Act lordly, princely parts, and live
The bold antitheses of Christ.

The wine of sense drank to the lees
 Till morbid grown in its excess,
 All things become a weariness,
Save Power, Wealth and life-long ease ;

Regarding Life a sensuous feast
For all to revel at, like swine,
Not Opportunity Divine,
For man to abrogate the beast.

While Bigotry all progress quells,
Filling the land with zealous dupes,
Where Scholar to the Dullard stoops ;
And Learning wears the cap-and-bells.

CXI.

Are surplised frauds to dwell at ease,
Enlightened Nations as their tools,
And earth continue breeding fools
Of measureless credulities ?

How long to us Time's cycles seem,
Which are, in sight of God, a day !
This wrong cannot endure away ;
We cannot know His Wisdom's scheme.

The life-time of a lie, in sooth,
Seems endless to the finite man,
And yet how very brief a span
In the Eternity of Truth !

How strange that Freeman cannot see
This subtle power's insidious trend ;
Nor rise in righteous wrath, and end
Its Despotism of dupery !

Its secret watchfulness alert,
With ever stealthy grasp, to clutch
The Talisman it covets much,
Which gained, were Freedom's deadly hurt.

CXII.

Dear Land ! the School's thy talisman,
The magian-wand that round thee draws
The magic circle of thy cause,
Guarding thy Freedom in its span,

And 'gainst all shapes of Demonism,
All reason-killing spawn of Hell,
A potent necromantic spell,
With stalwart force of exorcism.

Keep it thy amulet and shield !
For in constricting stress of creed,
Freedom is surely doomed to bleed,
Her fate ordained, confirmed and sealed.

Strangle the Python ere its coil,
Compressing human culture more,
Recalls the "darkest age" of yore,
And Saxon-virtues prove its spoil.

CXIII.

Beshrew a priest's inveterate greed !
Rend warp and woof of web-spun frauds :
Disprize the altar's tinsel gauds,
Scorning the sacerdotal breed.

Dispel chimeras ! Let all eyes
Behold with vision purged, uncloaked,
The hideous phantoms, priest-evoked,
Standing revealed : *Impostures ! Lies !*

Of Charity avoid the loss !
Let it thy every act pervade,
A form of Love that God has made
The Universe's binding force.

Let no mere Faith thy rule debauch,
Sanctioning dogmas ; nor yet blind
The imperial faculty of mind ;
Placing in Reason's hand the torch.

CXIV.

From all contaminations freed,
Naught to emasculate thy might,
Then wilt thou, eminent in light,
Illumine "all the world indeed ;"

And in that splendor shed afar,
A glow by altruism given,
Before the wondering worlds of Heaven
Earth rolls no more so sad a star.

Thy glories counting manifold,
By peoples joyed with happy days ;
Who jubilant, their voices raise,
Till to the stars acclaim is rolled.

From zone to zone the song will run,
While, as the anthemed-chorus swells,
Melodious conclave of the bells
Peal their responsive antiphon.

For all the steeped-tongues will chime
Carillon to the cadenced chant :
A blitheful sound reverberant
Throughout the ringing reach of Time.

And through the trumpet-coil of fame
The ransomed brotherhoods, o'erjoyed,
Blow praise abroad ; earth still uncloyed
With iteration of thy name.

CXV.

Dear Land ! unparagoned in worth,
The pride of every patriot's heart,
The refuge of the wronged thou art,
A People's rule ! the hope of earth.

Unto thy inspirations true,
Tread fearlessly the path of Right,
Made clear by Wisdom's guiding light,
And counceled by the wisest few,

From Arctic to Antarctic snow,
And where the tropic-girdled earth
Glows in an endless summer-birth,
The echo of thy fame will go,

Till only by earth's bournes defined,
With hate for every form of wrong ;
Foe of the arbitrary strong,
Thy Ægis bucklers all mankind.

And where thy banner floats unfurled,
Its *stars*, as *one* in myth of old,
Will warn the shepherds of her fold
Where Freedom's cradled in the world.

The earth no more condemned to mourn
The inhumanities of men :
Nations as Christs in advent, then
The VERY GOD OF PEACE were born.

Examples, linked with precept, must
Relax the Despot's brutal grasp ;
The fetters of the slave unclasp,
Or roll unworthy thrones in dust.

CXVI.

Be not, as Propagandist, weak,
But firm of purpose, strong in strife,
For in the swarming mob of life
There is no freedom for the meek.

Boldly asserting manhood's rights,
No virile force on shadows spent ;
Reason no longer impotent ;
Free to dispute the Right of Might.

Firm in *revolt* of priest-pretence,
Tainted with guile and low desire,
Who as the guides to God aspire,
While wallowing in the cess of sense.

Unbiased by corrupt appeal
Through selfish greed in statesman-guise
Or partisan majorities,
Where private gain mocks public weal;

By stainless purpose ever led,
In righting wrongs made manifest,
Towards Honor be thy steps addressed—
Honor and Glory wooed and wed.

CXVII.

Thou art the Chosen land where worth
And wisdom will establish sway,
Scourging all hoary wrongs away,
And all the crimes of feudal birth;

Where man, in scorn of cleric rods,
Will yet turn Churches into Schools,
When FACT and NOT ASSUMPTION rules
Those shrines of misbegotten Gods;

And changed in later times to be,
With all their ruck of Rite and Creed
(Warped trappings of the priestly breed),
The Junk-Shops of Theology.

And Science' guiding light appears,
And man, sustained by Truths, not Hopes,
No longer onward blindly gropes,
Seeking his God through grief and fears,

Nor by invented facts allured,
Which Dupes accept, but knowledge spurns ;
To THAT as to the Godhead turns,
Finding Eternal Life assured ;

Not harried by the silly fake,
In making man, God was at loss
How otherwise than on the Cross,
To expiate His huge mistake.

CXVIII.

Mankind's enfranchisement thy goal,
Into Life's tragic-drama go !
Act well thy part, it seems as though
God had rehearsed thee for that rôle.

Uphold the speech that frees the mind,
Enslaved by faith in worthless creeds,
Make views clear-visioned for all needs,
And thus free both the bond and blind.

Scorning the fictions of a sect,
And groveling faith's credulities,
Wipe off the dust from callous knees,
And let true manhood stand erect.

In fetishism, nevermore,
Searching to find, with false desire,
Evolving Deity from mire,
Truth's holy form from mythic lore.

Braving sectarian wrath and ban,
Till culture has the world released
From Rule of Prelate, Pope and Priest—
Mere euphemisms of Charlatan.

And dogmas of all Holy Sees,
All fictions, Superstition-bred,
Lie like the strangled pythons dead
Beside the cradled Hercules.

CXIX.

Avoid the curse of Church-ruled lands,
Lest, in some not-far-distant hour,
Thy grave prove but a step to Power,
Made gradient by prelatie hands.

For thy predestined fate may be,
In fostering Hierarchal lust,
That thou wilt grovel in the dust
Of darkness and credulity,

And swarming ignorance o'erwhelm
Thy proud embattled Ship-of-State,
And wreck it, through a Jesuit hate,
Though Freedom's hand were on the helm.

And to the patriot's sight appear
Her mournful loving eyes downcast,
Leaving her golden age at last,
Sad foot-prints of a grieved Astræa.

CXX.

Be pure in purpose, broad in plan,
And with unfaltering step advance
On that high plane of circumstance,
That makes for brotherhood of man.

For every race is kin to thee ;
Lighten the cross thy brother bears,
And, with a sympathy that wears
The impress of Divinity,

Aid Famine with thy bounteous hands,
Succor the struggling and distressed,
Raise up the fallen and oppressed
At home, and even in distant lands.

Among the foremost hold thy place,
To aid, enlighten and redress ;
Exemplar of all nobleness,
'Mong men the Archetypal race.

And arbitrate thy wrongs, and so
 Avoid the crime of warring hosts,
 Be thou a Perikles who boasts—
“None for my acts wears weeds of woe”!

Winning a name that earth delights;
 Of the world's welfare—truest friend;
 To wrong subdue and right defend,
The Champion of all human rights.

Till in all hearts thy cult abounds,
 Effacing evils, ranks and castes;
 And with potential vigor blasts
The perpetuity of Crowns.

CXXI.

That all may glory in thy worth,
 Magnetic glamour that invites
 Nations to be thy proselytes,
And heirs of tributary earth.

For Freedom's lustral floods set free,
Absterse the infamies that lurk
In Minster, Temple, Church and Kirk—
The Augeas of Feudality ;

And in marauding flow immersed,
Sceptre, Tiara, Crown and Stole,
In a detested litter roll—
The symbols of a thrall accursed.

EPILOGUE.

CXXII.

Perchance thy fame, evoking hate,
Tempts envious Powers to prevail
Against thee—and Armadas sail,
Noting thy peace-allegiant state ;

While Britain, proud pelagic Queen,
Beholding from her moated shores
Their “leather and prunella” wars ;
Knowing her kin, looks on, serene

Though her dread symbol at her gates,
Regardant! but with bristling mane
Horrent in anger, not in vain,
Daunting the allied foemen, waits.

If e'er confederate force beset
Her Power, and aid become a need,
Be not outdone in helpful deed ;
Do not forget ! Do not forget !

Unmindful of past taunting ways,
Be kin and kind, and let her see
How slight an air of sympathy
Brings up a smouldering love, ablaze.

And, ever coupled with thy name,
“ Peace and good will to men ”—to be
With universal Liberty,
Thy pass-words to Eternal Fame.

L'ENVOI.

CXXIII.

I hold in homage due the one
Who, with a mind of subtlest thought,
And tongue of fearless utterance, sought
By Truth—not statements fiction-spun—

To free a purblind class, enslaved
By Churchdom—he who pitying trod
Their imbecile beliefs, rough-shod,
And their mendacious anger braved.

Thy work on earth I hold divine,
Thou gentlest, noblest man of man !
My soul is with thee now as then ;
And loving hands stretched forth for thine.





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